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NEW BIOGRAPHIES

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BY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY,
HENRY ROGERS, THEODORE MARTIN,
AND OTHERS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE contents of this volume have been collected from the Eighth Edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, which is now passing through the press. The magnitude of that work places it quite beyond the reach of most persons; yet these Biographies which it entombs are such as every one would gladly possess. I am sure of rendering a grateful service to the public by disinterring and placing them within the reach of all.

The brevity of these compositions will recommend them to the mass of readers. Few persons have leisure to peruse voluminous memoirs of every distinguished man, yet few persons would be content to forego all knowledge of such men. A compact Biography like these, presenting a clear and distinct outline of the life, and producing a clear and distinct impression of the character, meets the necessity. Nor does this condensation involve the sacrifice of any essential feature. "I think," remarks Peter Bayne, "that Mr. Carlyle has demonstrated that a biography can be given in the compass of a review-article; his essay on Burns I con-

sider, in the full signification of the term, one of the most perfect biographies I ever looked into." * Mr. Bayne has furnished illustrations of his remark not less convincing, in his biographical chapters on Budgett, Wilberforce, and others.

For the few men of learned leisure, works voluminous with detail, like Boswell's Life of Johnson, must still be printed; but those who must run as they read will demand biographies that can be comprehended "within the compass of a review-article."

Some of the writers of these pieces are possibly but little known to the general reader, nor am I able to add much to his information beyond the statement that they are among the select contributors to the Encyclopædia. Mr. SPALDING, the author of the first and third pieces, is Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of St. Andrews. He is the author of a History of English Literature and of a work on Italy and the Italian Isles. Besides the sketches of Addison and Bacon, he has contributed to the Encyclopædia two articles of some length under the words "Fable" and "Fallacy." His style is agreeable, and his literary and moral judgments are mild but discriminating and independent. Mr. DIXON is known as a popular writer, chiefly through his book on Prison Life in Europe. His controversy with Macaulay respecting the character of William Penn has also contributed to give currency to his name in the literary world. His sketch of Howard in this volume is a remarkable

* The Christian Life, Social and Individual. By Peter Bayne, M. A. Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1856.

specimen of rapid and condensed narrative. For those who, like Mr. Gradgrind, delight in pure facts unmixed with criticism or speculation, this Biography will prove one of the most attractive of the series.

The Life of Horace, by THEODORE MARTIN, is a composition of which any writer might be proud. Seldom have classical erudition and elegant writing been more gracefully combined. The author of such a piece should be distinguished in the republic of letters; yet, so far as I am aware, he is quite unknown. It does not appear that he has ever published any thing over his own name, although it stands high on the roll of contributors to the Encyclopædia. Quite by accident, however, I have discovered that he was a joint author with Professor Aytoun of the brilliant and amusing Book of Ballads by Bon Gaultier. But as that book was published anonymously, it is impossible to discriminate the parts that came from Mr. Martin's pen. This Biography of Horace stimulates the hope that a scholar of such fine accomplishments will neither let his pen lie idle, nor continue to hide his light under a bushel.

The interest that still surrounds the name of Sir John Franklin will make the Life of that distinguished but ill-fated navigator, by SIR JOHN RICHARDSON, a welcome portion of this volume. Sir John was peculiarly fitted for his task. Himself an arctic navigator of note, and an associate of Franklin for many years in the line of his profession, he possessed a familiar knowledge of the whole subject that invests his account with the

character of authority. Nor is he an unpractised writer. Several publications have proceeded from his pen, among which may be named a Voyage through Rupert's Land for Franklin, and a Voyage of the Erebus and Terror. Of a different description, in matter and style, is Mr. BLACKIE'S article on Homer. It is more a piece of criticism than a Biography. What little there was to be told about the life of Homer Mr. Blackie has well told; but the main portion of the essay is devoted to a discussion of the famous Wolfian theory respecting the integrity of the Homeric Poems. Mr. Blackie, like a true Scotchman, takes the side of common sense against German speculation. The article throughout is a piece of vigorous argumentation, and does credit to his position as the Professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh. Professor Blackie is the author of a work on the Pronunciation of Greek and Latin Quantity, of an essay on Plato in the Edinburgh Essays for 1856, and of a volume of poems, just from the press, entitled, Lays and Legends of Ancient Greece, with other Poems.

The sketch of James Crichton will make the reader acquainted with a remarkable person respecting whom his curiosity may have been piqued by frequent but always bare allusions to him, by English writers, as "the admirable Crichton." It is a curious history, and on this account I have decided to include it in the present collection. The author of it, DAVID IRVING, is a veteran litterateur, but is more distinguished for his erudition than for his style. This, however, is one of his happiest efforts. Besides various contributions to the Encyclopædia,

Mr. Irving has published several works in his own name.

James David Forbes, the author of the sketch of Sir Humphry Davy, holds an eminent position among men of science. He is Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and corresponding member of the Institute of France. It marks the estimation in which he is held, that he was selected to continue the history of Mathematical and Physical Science which was so admirably commenced by Professor Playfair and Sir John Leslie in the earlier Dissertations attached to the Encyclopædia. In the Sixth Dissertation, now just published, Professor Forbes brings the history down to the year 1850. It is a volume by itself, and is as entertaining as it is instructive. The sketch of Sir Humphry is from this Dissertation. It is distinguished less by biographical detail, than by an eloquent and perspicuous account of the great chemist's brilliant discoveries, a warm appreciation of his genius, and a beautiful delineation of his character.

The *dii majores* of the volume are Henry Rogers and Thomas Babington Macaulay. They differ from each other in glory, but each has an assured position in the pantheon of literature. An elaborate discussion of their merits does not fall within the scope of this Introduction, but an outline of their histories may find here an appropriate place.

Of Henry Rogers I have been able to gather but meagre notices. He was educated for the ministry at Highbury College, and for a few years was settled as the pastor of an Independent congregation. This charge he was compelled to resign in conse-

quence of ill health. He next became Professor of the English Language and Literature in University College, London, but resigned that chair on his appointment as one of the Professors in the Independent College at Spring Hill, Birmingham. This position he still continues to occupy.

Mr. Rogers is widely known as one of the ablest contributors to the Edinburgh Review. The greater part of all that he has published first appeared in that repository of choice literature. Among the most striking of these pieces are those on the Genius of Plato, Recent Developments of Puseyism, The Vanity and Glory of Literature, Descartes, John Locke, and Reason and Faith, their Claims and Conflicts. This last essay attracted much attention when it first appeared, and an edition of it in a separate form was published in London. A collection of these Essays in three octavo volumes was published some years since by Longman of London, and more recently a duodecimo edition of the same has been issued from the same press. A portion of the Essays has also been reprinted in this country. The whole collection constitutes a monument such as few periodical writers have built for themselves.

But the chief fame of Mr. Rogers rests upon his work entitled, The Eclipse of Faith. This is unquestionably the finest specimen of Socratic reasoning in the English language. Its chief aim was to unearth and refute the subtle infidelities of Francis William Newman and Theodore Parker. The blow struck home, and forced from Mr. Newman a sharp outcry. On putting out a new edition of his own book

he added a chapter of angry reply to his assailant. This speedily drew forth a Defence of the Eclipse which gave the author of Phases of Faith his *coup de grace*. The American heresiarch prudently kept silence. Both the Eclipse and the Defence have been reprinted in this country with great gain to the fortunate publishers. Of the Biographies in this volume, Mr. Rogers contributes a larger number than any other writer. All of them are upon subjects congenial to his habits of thought, and all bear marks of his genius.

It remains only to sketch the career of the most brilliant Essayist, the most popular Historian, and the greatest Master of Style in modern times.

Thomas Babington Macaulay is of Scottish descent. His great-grandfather was Aulay Macaulay, minister of Harris. His grandfather, John Macaulay, was also a Presbyterian minister, first in the island of South Uist, and afterwards in the Highland parish of Cardross. He received a visit from Dr. Samuel Johnson during his tour in the Hebrides, and is favorably mentioned in the Narrative of that celebrated Johnsonian exploit. The daughter of this John Macaulay married Thomas Babington, a rich English merchant, from which circumstance it is probable that the Historian came by his name. His father, Zachary Macaulay, is distinguished in the annals of philanthropy as the associate of Wilberforce, Clarkson, and Stephen, in accomplishing, after a struggle of twenty years, the overthrow of the British Slave-trade. A monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey marks the national sense of his character and public services. The wife of

Zachary Macaulay was Selina, daughter of Mr. Thomas Mills, a Bristol bookseller. Thomas Babington, their son, was born at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, October 25, 1800. I have met with no account of his earlier years. In 1818 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was graduated with high distinction. In 1821 he was elected to the Craven Scholarship; took his degree as B. A. in 1822; became Fellow of his College in 1824, and M. A. in 1825. He was destined for the legal profession, and in 1826 was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn. He was not, however, inclined to seek forensic celebrity. Already he had entered upon that path in which he was to win his greatest fame. In 1824, he published some poems in the Etonian, and in Knight's Quarterly Magazine; and in 1825, he made his first contribution to the Edinburgh Review. Among those early poetic pieces the best known are the ballads of the Spanish Armada, and of the Battle of Ivry.

Ere long the political arena was thrown open to him. The leaders of the Whig party, attracted by the splendor of his rising genius, complimented him with the appointment of a Commissioner of Bankruptcy. Under the same influences he entered parliament in 1830, as a representative for the Marquis of Lansdowne's borough of Calne; and about the same time he was made Secretary to the Board of Control. His maiden speech was made in support of Mr. Grant's motion for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal the Civil Disabilities of the Jews. Then followed the memorable Debate on the Reform Bill, which was the making of his political fortunes. In

that Debate he is said to have taken a part "second only in influence to that enacted by the present Earl of Derby." His oratory had all the brilliancy of his essays.* An acute observer who listened to one of his speeches on the occasion described him as having "clothed himself in the Reform Bill as in a mantle of light." His growing fame as a parliamentary orator now commended him to a more influential constituency, and accordingly, in 1832, he was returned as one of the two members for the city

* Mr. Therry, formerly a reporter for the London Morning Chronicle, and now, I believe, an Australian judge, has recently communicated to the public the following anecdote: — "At the Annual Anti-Slavery Meeting (I think of 1826) Mr. Macaulay, whose fame as a brilliant speaker at 'The Union Society' at Cambridge, and a Society of the same name in London, had preceded him, delivered the first of those brilliant orations with which the country has been since delighted. At its close, I told Mr. Macaulay that, from his rapid mode of speaking, and from so much of the merit of the speech being dependent on the accurate collocation of the words in which his many metaphors and figures were expressed, it would be only an act of justice to himself to furnish a report of the speech. At first he hesitated, and expressed some doubt whether he could furnish sufficiently ample notes for the purpose; — but said 'he would think of it,' on my telling him if he thought proper to do so, I should pay due attention to the notes, provided he forwarded them to the 'Morning Chronicle' office by eight o'clock that evening. On coming to the office of the 'Morning Chronicle' at that hour, I found a large packet containing a *verbatim* report of the speech as spoken — the brilliant passages marked in pencil, and the whole manuscript well thumbed over, furnishing manifest denotement that no speech in 'Enfield's Speaker' was more laboriously and faithfully committed to a school-boy's memory, than was his first essay in public eloquence committed to memory by the great historian of the age."

of Leeds. This translation from the representative seat of a rotten borough of five thousand inhabitants to that of a rich commercial city of a hundred and fifty thousand was sufficiently striking.* In 1834, Mr. Macaulay resigned his seat and went to the East as a member of the Supreme Council of Calcutta. That lucrative post he enjoyed for three years. Many officials would have been content with only enjoying it; but Mr. Macaulay improved the leisure it allowed and the opportunities it afforded to make himself at home in the obscure annals of British India. One result of these studies were his magnificent histories of Lord Clive and Warren Hastings. From India he returned to England, and in 1839 became Secretary-at-War in Lord Melbourne's Government. In 1840 he was returned to parliament by the city of Edinburgh. The same year marks his first introduction to the world as an author. The honor of having brought him out in that character belongs to this country. Although well known in circles at home as a leading contributor to the Edinburgh Review, he yet had never published any thing in his own name when, in 1840, the first two volumes of his Essays were issued from a Boston press. There is a little piece of history connected with the origin of that publication which, as I had some hand in the business, I may very well relate here.

It happened in the year 1838, while I was pursu-

* By the passage of the Reform Bill, which was so largely the work of Mr. Macaulay, Calne was deprived of one of its two members; so that he may be said in a manner to have kicked down the ladder by which he mounted to political eminence.

ing my professional studies in one of our New England seminaries, that my attention was first called to an article on Milton in the Edinburgh Review. It was commended to my perusal in such laudatory fashion that I was induced to seek it out. The volume proved to be out of the library, and I soon discovered that it was scarcely ever in. Like other favorite books among collegians, it travelled from hand to hand, being promised in advance by one to another, and lingering in the library only just long enough to be transferred on the librarian's books. There was nothing for me to do but to hunt up the last promissee, place myself *à la queue*, and await my turn. In due time the coveted volume came into my possession. Its appearance was sufficiently marked. A broad dark stripe along the edges of the leaves through the middle of the volume plainly indicated whereabouts the essay was, and with what devotion it had been thumbed. It is needless to say that it gave me the same exquisite pleasure that it has given to every one of its million of readers. Very naturally, I inquired who might be the author of such a splendid piece of composition. The reply was that "it was said to be written by a Mr. Macaulay." In answer to my next inquiry whether he had written any thing else, I was told of an article on Hallam's History of England which was generally thought to be by the same hand. Another on Machiavelli was spoken of more doubtfully. These were all about which any thing was known. I procured them both and soon satisfied myself of their genuineness.

By this time I felt very much like a prospecting

gold-digger who has come upon indications of a rich *placer*. I inferred that the author of such remarkable pieces was probably a regular contributor to the Review, and that in the twelve years which had then elapsed since the publication of the article on Milton he had furnished many others. I therefore set myself to explore *ab initio* the bound volumes of the Review. Each article was examined and judged by its style. Some were so manifestly alien in structure and diction to the Milton article as to be quickly rejected. Others simulated the style of that piece so nearly, in some points, as to make a more prolonged consideration necessary. But I soon came to learn that there was one characteristic which invariably distinguished Mr. Macaulay's style. This was the absence of the parenthesis. In all the ten or twelve volumes of his works, I do not think a single instance of this inelegant characteristic can be found. Nor is such omission the result of an unconscious habit of mind. Mr. Macaulay has evidently excluded that form of expression from his compositions out of malice prepense; and one can see that the whole structure of his sentences is radically modified by his hostility to the interloping clause Relying, then, on this mark, I found the task of selection, within certain limits, by no means difficult. If I was left for a while in doubt respecting any article, the occurrence of a parenthesis would end the doubt and lead at once to its rejection. The converse of this, however, did not follow; the effect of the criterion was only negative. The presence of the parenthesis was sufficient to warrant a decision against the article under examination, but

its absence was by no means sufficient to warrant a decision in its favor. Other characteristics, with which the public have long since become familiar, assisted in making up the judgment.

As the result of my explorations, I discovered twelve additional articles which I was satisfied were from the same hand that wrote the three already named; and on submitting them to some of my fellow students I found my judgment confirmed by theirs. I now conceived the design of having these pieces collected and published. No sordid hope of gain mingled in the motives to this design; on the contrary, we tyros were so enamoured of these charming essays that we were willing to pay generously for copies to place in our nascent libraries. Such a design I indeed felt to be not a little presumptuous; for so great was my reverence of a book that I could not well conceive of myself as any part of the producing cause of such an existence. However, having occasion soon after to visit Boston, I took along my list, and with no small misgivings placed it in the hands of Weeks, Jordan, and Company, then a young and enterprising publishing house. I referred them to the similar collection of Carlyle's Essays which Ralph Waldo Emerson had introduced to the American public not long before, and told them that in whatever degree that venture was likely to prove successful, in a still greater degree was this likely to prove so, inasmuch as the style of Macaulay was more to the popular taste. Having exhausted my little stock of argument, I left the matter with them to consider and returned to my studies. Within a week after, I received by post

an imposing printed Prospectus announcing "Macaulay's Miscellanies" for immediate publication, and giving my list as the table of contents. The flutter of delight into which I was thrown by this hardly expected response to my proposition did not prevent me from perceiving that the worthy publishers were getting on much too fast. I therefore hastened to remind them that the list was as yet only conjectural, and would need to be authenticated before publication. This, then, was the next point to be attended to. A consultation was held among those who sympathized in the scheme, as the result of which it was agreed that myself and another of our number should address both Mr. Macaulay and the Editor of the Edinburgh Review on the subject. Accordingly, each of us prepared an elaborately respectful letter,— the one for Professor Napier and the other for the Essayist,—announcing the scheme, transmitting the list, and asking for its authentication, with the addition of any other articles that might have escaped our notice. It is scarcely necessary to say that no answer was ever returned to these boyish epistles.

Meanwhile, a monetary paralysis prostrated the business of the country, and for a time the project was left to slumber. When the crisis was past it was revived, and the publishers having learned that the late Professor Norton, of Harvard College, had a personal acquaintance with Mr. Macaulay, placed my list in his hands with the request that he would get it authenticated. The Professor kindly undertook the service, and in due time received a letter from Mr. Macaulay in which he acknowledged each

of the articles as his own, and named one or two others which, I think, had appeared in the Review subsequent to my exploration. The letter was for a short time in my possession, and I well remember the substance of two things which it contained. One was a strong disparagement of the article on Milton; the other was a statement that the article on Church and State, then just published, was making some stir in England. It was apparent that of these two offspring of his genius the first-born was by no means the favorite child. They do indeed differ, but it is as one star differeth from another. Mr. Macaulay had no need to be ashamed of an Essay which contains the finest passage on the Puritans in the language, and which sent Robert Hall in his old age to the study of the Italian tongue. To return; the work was now speedily published, and some months later, on meeting one of the publishers, I inquired after its success. He informed me that a thousand copies had been printed in the expectation that all of them might be sold in one or two years, with which result he would have been well content. Instead of that, however, he said that the whole edition had gone off in four months, and that five hundred more could have been disposed of in the same time. But unfortunately, the work had not been stereotyped. So moderate at first were the expectations entertained of an author for every fresh product of whose pen rival publishers of three great American cities now watch with all the greed of a California gold-digger.

In 1842, Mr. Macaulay published his Lays of Ancient Rome. Within the narrow but correspond-

ingly difficult department of poetry to which they belong, these poems stand unrivalled. In 1843, he put forth a selection of his contributions to the Edinburgh Review, in three octavo volumes. In the brief preface to this collection he stated that the step was taken in order to protect the publishers of the Review against the American edition, of which many copies had been imported; but at the same time he professed to regard the essays as unworthy of that permanent place in English literature which such a step seemed to imply. He also took occasion to reiterate before the public the sentiments which he had expressed in private respecting the article on Milton. "It was written," he says, "when the author was fresh from college, and contains scarcely a paragraph such as his matured judgment approves." Whatever he might say, however, it is plain that he felt a lurking kindness for the piece, since he neither excluded it from his collection, as he did some other pieces, nor did he remodel or even prune it, but sent it forth again, still, as he says, "overloaded with gaudy and ungraceful ornament." The little preface was noteworthy on one other account; it contained a frank acknowledgment of the injustice which its author had formerly done to a distinguished writer — Mr. Mill — when reviewing his writings on political economy. The grace of this acknowledgment was heightened by the omission of the obnoxious essays from the collection.

On the return of the Whigs to power in 1846, under Lord John Russell, Mr. Macaulay was made Paymaster-General of the Forces with a seat in the Cabinet;

and for a time he exercised the functions of his office. The Maynooth Grant, however, of which he was in favor, occasioned a serious disagreement between him and his constituents; and in consequence, at an election in 1847, Edinburgh rejected him and put in his place a Mr. Cowan, whose 'theological bias and ecclesiastical views' were more consonant with its own. While this exclusion from parliament was still a subject of regret, a rumor flew abroad that he was to devote the leisure thus secured to writing the History of England. High expectations were raised, which were more than satisfied, when, in 1848, the first two volumes were laid before the world. In the same year he was chosen Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, and in the year following was nominated Professor of Ancient History in the Royal Academy. At a general election, in 1852, he was again put in nomination by his friends for the city of Edinburgh. But he himself 'stood haughtily aloof from the contest, neither issuing an address nor appearing as a candidate at the hustings.' His election was nevertheless secured, and going northward in the autumn, he delivered a speech which is said to have done much in clearing the way for the Coalition Government which followed, and in support of which he subsequently made two orations in the House of Commons. In 1853, his Speeches were collected and published with his own corrections, and in 1855, came out the third and fourth volumes of his History. Every lover of English literature will fervently pray that he may live long enough to complete that vast undertaking; but no one can with reason expect

that he will live to complete the one half of it on the scale by which it has been begun. Meanwhile let him but continue to finish and put forth, from time to time, such exquisite cabinet-pieces as his four Biographies in this volume, and the world will wait more patiently while he is filling up his larger canvas with the grand historic groups.

S. C. E.

Boston, March, 1857.

NEW BIOGRAPHIES.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

Joseph Addison was the eldest son of Dean Addison. He was born at his father's rectory of Milston in Wiltshire, on the first day of May, 1672. After having passed through several schools, the last of which was the Charter-house, he went to Oxford, when he was about fifteen years old. He was first entered of Queen's College, but after two years was elected a scholar of Magdalen College, having, it is said, been recommended by his skill in Latin versification. He took his master's degree in 1693, and held a fellowship from 1699 to 1711.

The eleven years extending from 1693, or his twenty-first year, to 1704, when he was in his thirty-second, may be set down as the first stage of his life as a man of letters. During this period, embracing no profession, and not as yet entangled in official business, he was a student, an observer, and an author; and though the literary works which he then produced are not those on which his permanent celebrity rests, they gained for him in his own day a high reputation. He had at first intended to become a clergyman; but his talents having attracted the attention of leading statesmen belonging to the Whig party, he was speedily diverted from

his earlier views by the countenance which these men bestowed on him. His first patron (to whom he seems to have been introduced by Congreve) was Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, who was himself a dabbler in literature, and a protector of literary men; and he became known afterwards to the accomplished and excellent Somers. While both of them were quite able to estimate justly his literary merits, they had regard mainly to the services which they believed him capable of rendering to the nation or the party; and accordingly they encouraged him to regulate his pursuits with a view to public and official employment. For a considerable time, however, he was left to his own resources, which cannot have been otherwise than scanty.

His first literary efforts were poetical. In 1693, a short poem of his, addressed to Dryden, was inserted in the third volume of that veteran writer's *Miscellanies*. The next volume of this collection contained his translation, in tolerable heroic couplets, of "all Virgil's Fourth Georgic, except the story of Aristæus." Two and a half books of Ovid were afterwards attempted; and to his years of early manhood belonged also his prose *Essay on Virgil's Georgics*, a performance which hardly deserved, either for its style or for its critical excellence, the compliment paid it by Dryden, in prefixing it to his own translation of the poem. The most ambitious of those poetical assay-pieces is the "Account of the Greatest English Poets," dated April, 1694, and addressed affectionately to Sacheverell, the poet's fellow collegian, who afterwards became so notorious in the party quarrels of the time. This piece, spirited both in language and in versification, is chiefly noticeable as showing that ignorance of old English poetry which was then universal. Addison next, in 1695, published one of those compositions, celebrating contemporary events, and lauding contemporary great men, on which, during the half century that succeeded the Revolution, there was wasted so much of good writing

and of fair poetic ability. His piece, not very meritorious even in its own class, was addressed "To the King," and commemorates the campaign which was distinguished by William's taking of Namur. Much better than the poem itself are the introductory verses to Somers, then lord keeper. This production, perhaps intended as a remembrancer to the writer's patrons, did not at once produce any obvious effect; and we are left in considerable uncertainty as to the manner in which about this time Addison contrived to support himself. He corresponded with Tonson the bookseller about projected works, one of these being a Translation of Herodotus. It was probably at some later time that he purposed compiling a Dictionary of the English language. In 1699 a considerable collection of his Latin verses was published at Oxford, in the "Musæ Anglicanæ." These appear to have interested some foreign scholars; and several of them show curious symptoms of his characteristic humor.

In the same year, his patrons, either having still no office to spare for him, or desiring him to gain peculiarly high qualifications for diplomatic or other important business, provided for him temporarily by a grant, which, though bestowed on a man of great merit and promise, would not pass unquestioned in the present century. He obtained, on the recommendation of Lord Somers, a pension of three hundred pounds a year, designed (as Addison himself afterwards said in a memorial addressed to the crown) to enable him "to travel, and otherwise qualify himself to serve His Majesty." In the summer of 1699 he crossed into France, where, chiefly for the purpose of learning the language, he remained till the end of 1700; and after this he spent a year in Italy. In Switzerland, on his way home, he was stopped by receiving notice that he was to be appointed envoy to Prince Eugene, then engaged in the war in Italy. But his Whig friends were already tottering in their places; and, in March,

1702, the death of King William at once drove them from power and put an end to the pension. Indeed, Addison asserted that he never received but one year's payment of it, and that all the other expenses of his travels were defrayed by himself. He was able, however, to visit a great part of Germany, and did not reach Holland till the spring of 1703. His prospects were now sufficiently gloomy; he entered into treaty, oftener than once, for an engagement as a travelling tutor; and the correspondence in one of these negotiations has been preserved. Tonson had recommended him as the best person to attend in this character the son of the Duke of Somerset, commonly called "The Proud." The Duke, a profuse man in matters of pomp, was economical in questions of education. He wished Addison to name the salary he expected; this being declined, he announced, with great dignity, that he would give a hundred guineas a year; Addison accepted the munificent offer, saying, however, that he could not find his account in it otherwise than by relying on his Grace's future patronage; and his Grace immediately intimated that he would look out for some one else. Towards the end of 1703 Addison returned to England.

Works which he composed during his residence on the continent, were the earliest that showed him to have attained maturity of skill and genius. There is good reason for believing that his tragedy of *Cato*, whatever changes it may afterwards have suffered, was in great part written while he lived in France, that is, when he was about twenty-eight years of age. In the winter of 1701, amidst the stoppages and discomforts of a journey across the Mount Cenis, he composed, wholly or partly, his *Letter from Italy*, which is by far the best of his poems, if it is not rather the only one among them that at all justifies his claim to the poetical character. It contains some fine touches of description, and is animated by a noble tone of classical enthusiasm. While in Germany, he wrote his *Dialogues on Medals*, which, how

ever, were not published till after his death. These have much liveliness of style, and something of the gay humor which the author was afterwards to exhibit more strongly; but they show little either of antiquarian learning or of critical ingenuity. In tracing out parallels between passages of the Roman poets and figures or scenes which appear in ancient sculptures, Addison opened the easy course of inquiry which was afterwards prosecuted by Spence; and this, with the apparatus of spirited metrical translations from the classics, gave the work a likeness to his account of his travels. This account, entitled *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*, etc., he sent home for publication before his own return. It wants altogether the interest of personal narrative; the author hardly ever appears. The task in which he chiefly busies himself is that of exhibiting the illustrations which the writings of the Latin poets, and the antiquities and scenery of Italy, mutually give and receive. Many of the landscapes are sketched with great loveliness; and there are not a few strokes of arch humor. The statistical information is very meagre; nor are there many observations on society; and politics are no further meddled with than to show the moderate liberality of the writer's own opinions.

With the year 1704 begins a second era in Addison's life, which extends to the summer of 1710, when his age was thirty-eight. This was the first term of his official career; and though very barren of literary performance, it not only raised him from indigence, but settled definitely his position as a public man. His correspondence shows that, while on the Continent, he had been admitted to confidential intimacy by diplomatists and men of rank: immediately on his return he was enrolled in the Kitcat Club, and brought thus and otherwise into communication with the gentry of the Whig party. Although all accounts agree in representing him as a shy man, he was at least saved from all risk

of making himself disagreeable in society, by his unassuming manners, his extreme caution, and that sedulous desire to oblige, which his satirist Pope exaggerated into a positive fault. His knowledge and ability were esteemed so highly, as to confirm the expectations formerly entertained of his usefulness in public business; and the literary fame already acquired soon furnished an occasion for recommending him to public employment. Though the Whigs were out of office, the administration which succeeded them was, in all its earlier changes, of a complexion so mixed and uncertain, that the influence of their leaders was not entirely lost. Not long after Marlborough's great victory at Blenheim, it is said that Godolphin, the lord treasurer, expressed to Lord Halifax a desire to have the great duke's fame extended by a poetical tribute. Halifax seized the opportunity of recommending Addison as the fittest man for the duty; stipulating, we are told, that the service should not be unrewarded, and doubtless satisfying the minister, that his protegé possessed other qualifications for office besides dexterity in framing heroic verse. *The Campaign*, the poem thus written to order, was received with extraordinary applause; and it is probably as good as any that ever was prompted by no more worthy inspiration. It has indeed neither the fiery spirit which Dryden threw into occasional pieces of the sort, nor the exquisite polish that would have been given by Pope, if he had stooped to make such uses of his genius: but many of the details are pleasing; and in the famous passage of the Angel, as well as in several others, there is even something of force and imagination.

The consideration covenanted for by the poet's friends was faithfully paid. A vacancy occurred by the death of another celebrated man, John Locke; and in November, 1764, Addison was appointed one of the five commissioners of appeal in Excise. The duties of the place must have been as light for him as they had been for his predecessor;

for he continued to hold it with all the appointments he subsequently received from the same ministry. But there is no reason for believing that he was more careless than other public servants in his time; and the charge of incompetency as a man of business, which has been brought so positively against him, cannot possibly be true as to this first period of his official career. Indeed the specific allegations refer exclusively to the last years of his life; and, if he had not really shown practical ability in the period now in question, it is not easy to see how he, a man destitute alike of wealth, of social or fashionable liveliness, and of family interest, could have been promoted, for several years, from office to office, as he was, till the fall of the administration to which he was attached. In 1706, he became one of the under-secretaries of state, serving first under Hedges, who belonged to the Tory section of the government, and afterwards under Lord Sunderland, Marlborough's son-in-law, and a zealous follower of Addison's early patron, Somers. The work of this office however, like that of the commissionership, must often have admitted of performance by deputy. For in 1707, the Whigs having become stronger, Lord Halifax was sent on a mission to the Elector of Hanover; and, besides taking Vanbrugh the dramatist with him as king-at-arms, he selected Addison as his secretary. In 1708, he entered parliament, sitting at first for Lostwithiel, but afterwards for Malmesbury, which, being six times elected, he represented from 1710 till his death. Here unquestionably he did fail. What part he may have taken in the details of business we are not informed; but he was always a silent member, unless it be true that he once attempted to speak and sat down in confusion. In 1709, Lord Wharton, the father of the notorious duke, having been named Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Addison became his secretary, receiving also an appointment as keeper of records. This event happened only about a year and a half before the dismissal of

the ministry; and the Irish secretary would seem to have transacted the business of his office chiefly in London. But there are letters showing him to have made himself acceptable to some of the best and most distinguished persons in Dublin; and he escaped without having any quarrel with Swift, his acquaintance with whom had begun some time before. In the literary history of Addison, those seven years of official service are almost a blank, till we approach their close. He defended the government in an anonymous pamphlet on *The Present State of the War;* he united compliments to the all-powerful Marlborough, with indifferent attempts at lyrical poetry in his opera of *Rosamond;* and, besides furnishing a prologue to Steele's comedy of *The Tender Husband*, he perhaps gave some assistance in the composition of the play. Irish administration, however, allowed, it would seem, more leisure than might have been expected. During the last few months of his tenure of office, Addison contributed largely to the *Tatler*. But his entrance on this new field does nearly coincide with the beginning of a new section in his history.

Even the coalition ministry of Godolphin was too whiggish for the taste of Queen Anne; and the tories, the favorites of the court, gained, both in parliamentary power and in popularity out of doors, by a combination of lucky accidents, dexterous management, and divisions and double-dealing among their adversaries. The real failure of the prosecution of Addison's old friend, Sacheverell, completed the ruin of the whigs; and in August, 1710, an entire revolution in the ministry had been completed. The tory administration, which succeeded, kept its place till the queen's death in 1714; and Addison was thus left to devote four of the best years of his life, from his thirty-ninth year to his forty-third, to occupations less lucrative than those in which his time had recently been frittered away, but much more conducive to the extension of his own fame, and to the benefit of

English literature. Although our information as to his pecuniary affairs is very scanty, we are entitled to believe that he was now independent of literary labor. He speaks, in an extant paper, of having had (but lost) property in the West Indies; and he is understood to have inherited several thousand pounds from a younger brother, who was governor of Madras. In 1711, he purchased for ten thousand pounds, the estate of Bilton, near Rugby; the same place which, in our own day, became the residence of Mr. Apperley, better known by the assumed name of "Nimrod."

During those four years he produced a few political writings. Soon after the fall of the ministry, he contributed five numbers to *The Whig Examiner*, a paper set up in opposition to the tory periodical of the same name, which was then conducted by the poet, Prior, and afterwards became the vehicle of Swift's most vehement invectives against the party he had once belonged to. These are certainly the most ill-natured of Addison's writings; but they are neither lively nor vigorous. There is more spirit in his allegorical pamphlet, *The Trial and Conviction of Count Tariff*.

But from the autumn of 1710 till the end of 1714, his principal employment was the composition of his celebrated Periodical Essays. The honor of inventing the plan of such compositions, as well as that of first carrying the idea into execution, belongs to Richard Steele, who had been a schoolfellow of Addison at the Charter-house, continued to be on intimate terms with him afterwards, and attached himself with his characteristic ardor to the same political party. When, in April, 1709, Steele published the first number of the *Tatler*, Addison was in Dublin, and knew nothing of the design. He is said to have detected his friend's authorship only by recognizing in one of the early papers, a critical remark which he remembered having himself communicated to Steele. He began to furnish essays in a few weeks,

assisted occasionally while he held office, and afterwards wrote oftener than Steele himself. He thus contributed in all, if his literary executor selected his contributions correctly, more than sixty of the two hundred and seventy-one essays which the work contains. The *Tatler* exhibited, in more ways than one, symptoms of being an experiment. The projector, imitating the news-sheets in form, thought it prudent to give, in each number, news in addition to the essay; and there was a want, both of unity and correct finishing, in the putting together of the literary materials. Addison's contributions, in particular, are in many places as lively as any thing he ever wrote; and his style, in its more familiar moods at least, had been fully formed before he returned from the Continent. But, as compared with his later pieces, these are only what the painter's loose studies and sketches are to the landscapes which he afterwards constructs out of them. In his inventions of incidents and characters, one thought after another is hastily used and hastily dismissed, as if he were putting his own powers to the test, or trying the effect of various kinds of objects on his readers; his most ambitious flights, in the shape of allegories and the like, are stiff and inanimate; and his favorite field of literary criticism is touched so slightly, as to show that he still wanted confidence in the taste and knowledge of the public.

The *Tatler* was dropped at the beginning of 1711; but only to be followed by the *Spectator*, which was begun on the first day of March, and appeared every weekday till the 6th day of December, 1712. It had then completed the five hundred and fifty-five numbers usually collected in its first seven volumes. Addison, now in London and unemployed, coöperated with Steele constantly from the very opening of the series; and the two contributing almost equally, seem together to have written not very much less than five hundred of the papers. Emboldened

by the success of their former adventure, they devoted their whole space to the essays. They relied, with a confidence which the extraordinary popularity of the work fully justified, on their power of exciting the interest of a wide audience by pictures and reflections drawn from a field which embraced the whole compass of ordinary life and ordinary knowledge; no kind of practical themes being positively excluded except such as were political, and all literary topics being held admissible, for which it seemed possible to command attention from persons of average taste and information. A seeming unity was given to the undertaking, and curiosity and interest awakened on behalf of the conductors, by the happy invention of the Spectator's Club, in which Steele is believed to have drawn all the characters. The figure of Sir Roger de Coverley, however, the best even in the opening group, is the only one that was afterwards elaborately depicted; and Addison was the author of all the papers in which his oddities and amiabilities are so admirably delineated. To him, also, the *Spectator* owed a very large share of its highest excellences. His were many, and these the most natural and elegant, if not the most original, of its humorous sketches of human character and social eccentricities, its good-humored satires on ridiculous features in manners, and on corrupt symptoms in public taste; these topics, however, making up a department in which Steele was fairly on a level with his more famous coadjutor. But Steele had neither learning, nor taste, nor critical acuteness, sufficient to qualify him for enriching the series with such literary disquisitions, as those which Addison insinuated so often into the lighter matter of his essays, and of which he gave an elaborate specimen in his celebrated and agreeable criticism on *Paradise Lost*. Still further beyond the powers of Steele were those speculations on the theory of literature and of the processes of thought analogous to it, which, in the essays *On the Pleas-*

ures of the Imagination, Addison prosecuted, not, indeed, with much of philosophical depth, but with a sagacity and comprehensiveness which we shall undervalue much, unless we remember how little of philosophy was to be found in any critical views previously propounded in England. To Addison, further, belong those essays which (most frequently introduced in regular alternation in the papers of Saturday) rise into the region of moral and religious meditation, and tread the elevated ground with a step so graceful as to allure the reader irresistibly to follow; sometimes, as in the *Walk through Westminster Abbey*, enlivening solemn thought by gentle sportiveness; sometimes flowing on with an uninterrupted sedateness of didactic eloquence; and sometimes shrouding sacred truths in the veil of ingenious allegory, as in the majestic *Vision of Mirza*. While, in a word, the *Spectator*, if Addison had not taken part in it, would probably have been as lively and humorous as it was, and not less popular in its own day, it would have wanted some of its strongest claims on the respect of posterity, by being at once lower in its moral tone, far less abundant in literary knowledge, and much less vigorous and expanded in thinking. In point of style, again, the two friends resemble each other so closely as to be hardly distinguishable, when both are dealing with familiar objects, and writing in a key not rising above that of conversation. But, in the higher tones of thought and composition, Addison showed a mastery of language raising him very decisively, not above Steele only, but above all his contemporaries. Indeed, it may safely be said, that no one, in any age of our literature, has united, so strikingly as he did, the colloquial grace and ease which mark the style of an accomplished gentleman, with the power of soaring into a strain of expression noble and eloquently dignified.

On the cessation of the *Spectator*, Steele set on foot the *Guardian*, which, started in March, 1713, came to an end in

October, with its one hundred and seventy-fifth number. To this series Addison gave fifty-three papers, being a very frequent writer during the latter half of its progress. None of his essays here aim so high as the best of those in the *Spectator;* but he often exhibits both his cheerful and well-balanced humor, and his earnest desire to inculcate sound principles of literary judgment. In the last six months of the year 1714, the *Spectator* reached its eighth and last volume; for which Steele appears not to have written at all, and Addison to have contributed twenty-four of the eighty papers. Most of these form, in the unbroken seriousness both of their topics and of their manner, a contrast to the majority of his essays in the earlier volumes; but several of them, both in this vein and in one less lofty, are among the best known, if not the finest of all his essays. Such are the *Mountain of Miseries;* the antediluvian novel of *Shallum and Hilpa;* the *Reflections by Moonlight on the Divine Perfections.*

In April, 1713, Addison brought on the stage, very reluctantly, as we are assured, and can easily believe, his tragedy of *Cato.* Its success was dazzling: but this issue was mainly owing to the concern which the politicians took in the exhibition. The Whigs hailed it as a brilliant manifesto in favor of constitutional freedom. The Tories echoed the applause, to show themselves enemies of despotism, and professed to find in Julius Cæsar a parallel to the formidable Marlborough. Even with such extrinsic aids, and the advantage derived from the established fame of the author, *Cato* could never have been esteemed a good dramatic work, unless in an age in which dramatic power and insight were almost extinct. It is poor even in its poetical elements, and is redeemed only by the finely solemn tone of its moral reflections, and the singular refinement and equable smoothness of its diction.

The literary career of Addison might almost be held as

closed soon after the death of Queen Anne, which occurred in August, 1714, when he had lately completed his forty-second year. His own life extended only five years longer; and this closing portion of it offers little that is pleasing or instructive. We see him attaining the summit of his ambition, only to totter for a little and sink into an early grave. We are reminded of his more vigorous days by nothing but a few happy inventions interspersed in political pamphlets, and the gay fancy of a trifling poem on Kneller's portrait of George I.

The Lord Justices who, previously chosen secretly by the Elector of Hanover, assumed the government on the Queen's demise, were, as a matter of course, the leading Whigs. They appointed Addison to act as their secretary. He next held, for a very short time, his former office under the Irish Lord-Lieutenant; and, early in 1715, he was made one of the Lords of Trade. In the course of the same year occurred the first of the only two quarrels with friends, into which the prudent, good tempered, and modest Addison is said to have ever been betrayed. His adversary on this occasion was Pope, who, only three years before, had received, with an appearance of humble thankfulness, Addison's friendly remarks on his *Essay on Criticism;* but who, though still very young, was already very famous, and beginning to show incessantly his literary jealousies, and his personal and party hatreds. Several little misunderstandings had paved the way for a breach, when, at the same time with the first volume of Pope's *Iliad*, there appeared a translation of the first book of the poem, bearing the name of Thomas Tickell. Tickell in his preface, disclaimed all rivalry with Pope, and declared that he wished only to bespeak favorable attention for his contemplated version of the *Odyssey*. But the simultaneous publication was awkward; and Tickell, though not so good a versifier as Pope, was a dangerous rival, as being a good Greek scholar. Further,

he was Addison's under-secretary and confidential friend; and Addison, cautious though he was, does appear to have said, quite truly, that Tickell's translation was more faithful than the other. Pope's anger could not be restrained. He wrote those famous lines in which he describes Addison under the name of Atticus; and, as if to make reconciliation impossible, he not only circulated these among his friends, but sent a copy to Addison himself. Afterwards, he went so far as to profess a belief that the rival translation was really Addison's own. It is pleasant to observe that, after the insult had been perpetrated, Addison was at the pains, in his *Freeholder*, to express hearty approbation of the *Iliad* of Pope: who, on the contrary, after Addison's death, deliberately printed the striking but malignant lines in the epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot. In 1715, there was acted, with little success, the comedy of *The Drummer, or the Haunted House*, which, though it appeared under the name of Steele, was certainly not his, and was probably written in whole or chiefly by Addison. It contributes very little to his fame. From September 1715, to June 1716, he defended the Hanoverian succession, and the proceedings of the government in regard to the rebellion, in a paper called *The Freeholder*, which he wrote entirely himself, dropping it with the fifty-fifth number. It is much better tempered, not less spirited, and much more able in thinking, than his *Examiner*. The finical man of taste does indeed show himself to be sometimes weary of discussing constitutional questions; but he aims many enlivening thrusts at weak points of social life and manners; and the character of the fox-hunting Squire, who is introduced as the representative of the Jacobites, is drawn with so much humor and force that we regret not being allowed to see more of him.

In August, 1716, when he completed his forty-fourth year, Addison married the Countess Dowager of Warwick, a

widow of fifteen years' standing. She seems to have forfeited her jointure by the marriage, and to have brought her husband nothing but the occupancy of the Holland House at Kensington. We know hardly any thing positively in regard to the affair, or as to the origin or duration of his acquaintance with the lady or her family. But the current assertion that the courtship was a long one, is very probably erroneous. There are better grounds for believing the assertion, transmitted from Addison's own time, that the marriage was unhappy. The Countess is said to have been proud as well as violent, and to have supposed that, in contracting the alliance, she conferred honor instead of receiving it. To the uneasiness caused by domestic discomfort, the most friendly critics of Addison's character have attributed those habits of intemperance, which are said to have grown on him in his later years to such an extent as to have broken his health and accelerated his death. His most recent biographer, who disbelieves his alleged want of matrimonial quiet, has called in question, with much ingenuity, the whole story of his sottishness; and it must at any rate be allowed, that all the assertions which tend to fix such charges on him in the earlier parts of his life, rest on no evidence that is worthy of credit, and are in themselves highly improbable. Sobriety was not the virtue of the day; and the constant frequenting of coffee-houses, which figures so often in the *Spectator* and elsewhere, and which was really practised among literary men as well as others, cannot have had good effects. Addison, however, really appears to have had no genuine relish for this mode of life; and there are curious notices, especially in Steele's correspondence, of his having lodgings out of town, to which he retired for study and composition. But whatever the cause may have been, his health was shattered before he took that which was the last, and certainly the most unwise step, in his ascent to political power.

For a considerable time dissensions had existed in the ministry; and these came to a crisis in April, 1717, when those who had been the real chiefs, passed into the ranks of opposition. Townshend was dismissed; and Walpole anticipated dismission by resignation. There was now formed, under the leadership of General Stanhope and Lord Sunderland, an administration which, as resting on court influence, was nicknamed the "German ministry." Sunderland, Addison's former superior, became one of the two principal secretaries of state, and Addison himself was appointed as the other. His elevation to such a post had been contemplated on the accession of George I., and prevented, we are told, by his own refusal; and it is asserted, on the authority of Pope, that his acceptance now was owing only to the influence of his wife. Even if there is no ground, as there probably is not, for the allegation of Addison's inefficiency in the details of business, his unfitness for such an office in such circumstances was undeniable and glaring. It was impossible that a government, whose secretary of state could not open his lips in debate, should long face an opposition headed by Robert Walpole. The decay of Addison's health, too, was going on rapidly; being, we may readily conjecture, precipitated by anxiety, if no worse causes were at work. Ill health was the reason assigned for retirement, in the letter of resignation which he laid before the King in March, 1718, eleven months after his appointment. He received a pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year.

Not long afterwards, the divisions in the Whig party alienated him from his oldest friend. The Peerage bill, introduced in February, 1719, was attacked, on behalf of the opposition, in a weekly paper, which was called the *Plebeian*, and written by Steele. Addison answered it temperately enough in the *Old Whig;* provocation from the *Plebeian* brought forth angry retort from the *Whig;* Steele charged Addison with being so old a whig as to have forgotten his

principles; and Addison sneered at Grub Street, and called his friend "little Dickey." How Addison felt after this painful quarrel we are not told directly; but the *Old Whig* was excluded from that posthumous collection of his works, for which his executor Tickell had received from him authority and directions. In that collection was inserted a treatise on the evidences of the faith, entitled *Of the Christian Religion.* Its theological value is very small; but it is pleasant to regard it as the last effort of one who, amidst all weaknesses, was a man of real goodness as well as of eminent genius.

The disease under which Addison labored appears to have been asthma. It became more violent after his retirement from office; and was now accompanied by dropsy. His death-bed was placid and resigned, and comforted by those religious hopes which he had so often suggested to others, and the value of which he is said, in an anecdote of doubtful authority, to have now inculcated in a parting interview with his step-son. He died at Holland House, on the 17th day of June, 1719, six weeks after having completed his forty-seventh year. His body, after lying in state, was interred in the Poets' corner of Westminster Abbey.

The Biographia Britannica gives an elaborate memoir of him; particulars are well collected in the article under his name in the *Biographical Dictionary of the Society for the diffusion of Useful Knowledge;* and a good many new materials, especially letters, will be found in *The Life of Joseph Addison, by Lucy Aiken*, 1843.

FRANCIS ATTERBURY.

by Macaulay.

Francis Atterbury, a man who holds a conspicuous place in the political, ecclesiastical, and literary history of England, was born in the year 1662, at Middleton, in Buckinghamshire, a parish of which his father was rector. Francis was educated at Westminster School and carried thence to Christ Church a stock of learning which, though really scanty, he through life exhibited with such judicious ostentation that superficial observers believed his attainments to be immense. At Oxford, his parts, his taste, his bold, contemptuous, and imperious spirit soon made him conspicuous. Here he published at twenty, his first work, a translation of the noble poem of Absalom and Ahithopel into Latin verse. Neither the style nor the versification of the young scholar was that of the Augustan age. In English composition he succeeded much better. In 1687 he distinguished himself among many able men who wrote in defence of the Church of England, then persecuted by James II., and calumniated by apostates who had for lucre quitted her communion. Among these apostates none was more active and malignant than Obadiah Walker, who was master of University College, and who had set up there, under the royal patronage, a press for printing tracts against the established religion. In one of these tracts, written apparently by Walker himself, many aspersions were thrown

on Martin Luther. Atterbury undertook to defend the great Saxon reformer and performed that task in a manner singularly characteristic. Whoever examines his reply to Walker will be struck by the contrast between the feebleness of those parts which are argumentative and defensive, and the vigor of those parts which are rhetorical and aggressive. The Papists were so much galled by the sarcasms and invectives of the young polemic, that they raised the cry of treason, and accused him of having, by implication, called King James a Judas.

After the Revolution, Atterbury, though bred in the doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience, readily swore fealty to the new government. In no long time he took holy orders. He occasionally preached in London with an eloquence which raised his reputation, and soon had the honor of being appointed one of the royal chaplains. But he ordinarily resided at Oxford, where he took an active part in academical business, directed the classical studies of the undergraduates of his college, and was the chief adviser and assistant of Dean Aldrich, a divine now chiefly remembered by his catches, but renowned among his contemporaries as a scholar, a Tory, and a high-church man. It was the practice, not a very judicious practice, of Aldrich, to employ the most promising youths of his college in editing Greek and Latin books. Among the studious and well-disposed lads who were, unfortunately for themselves, induced to become teachers of philology when they should have been content to be learners, was Charles Boyle, son of the Earl of Orrery, and nephew of Robert Boyle, the great experimental philosopher. The task assigned to Charles Boyle was to prepare a new edition of one of the most worthless books in existence. It was a fashion among those Greeks and Romans who cultivated rhetoric as an art, to compose epistles and harangues in the names of eminent men. Some of these counterfeits are fabricated with such

exquisite taste and skill, that it is the highest achievement of criticism to distinguish them from originals. Others are so feebly and rudely executed that they can hardly impose on an intelligent school-boy. The best specimen which has come down to us is perhaps the oration for Marcellus, such an imitation of Tully's eloquence as Tully would himself have read with wonder and delight. The worst specimen is perhaps a collection of letters purporting to have been written by that Phalaris who governed Agrigentum more than 500 years before the Christian Era. The evidence, both internal and external, against the genuineness of these letters is overwhelming. When, in the fifteenth century, they emerged, in company with much that was far more valuable, from their obscurity, they were pronounced spurious by Politian, the greatest scholar of Italy, and by Erasmus, the greatest scholar on our side of the Alps. In truth it would be as easy to persuade an educated Englishman, that one of Johnson's Ramblers was the work of William Wallace, as to persuade a man like Erasmus, that a pedantic exercise, composed in the trim and artificial Attic of the time of Julian, was a despatch written by a crafty and ferocious Dorian who roasted people alive many years before there existed a volume of prose in the Greek language. But though Christ Church could boast of many good Latinists, of many good English writers, and of a greater number of clever and fashionable men of the world than belonged to any other academic body, there was not then in the college a single man capable of distinguishing between the infancy and the dotage of Greek literature. So superficial indeed was the learning of the rulers of this celebrated society, that they were charmed by an essay which Sir William Temple published in praise of the ancient writers. It now seems strange that even the eminent public services, the deserved popularity, and the graceful style of Temple should have saved so silly a performance from universal contempt.

Of the books which he most vehemently eulogized his eulogies proved that he knew nothing. In fact, he could not read a line of the language in which they were written. Among many other foolish things, he said that the letters of Phalaris were the oldest letters and also the best in the world. Whatever Temple wrote attracted notice. People who had never heard of the Epistles of Phalaris began to inquire about them. Aldrich, who knew very little Greek, took the word of Temple who knew none, and desired Boyle to prepare a new edition of these admirable compositions which, having long slept in obscurity, had become on a sudden objects of general interest.

The edition was prepared with the help of Atterbury, who was Boyle's tutor, and of some other members of the college. It was an edition such as might be expected from people who would stoop to edit such a book. The notes were worthy of the text; the Latin version worthy of the Greek original. The volume would have been forgotten in a month, had not a misunderstanding about a manuscript arisen between the young editor and the greatest scholar that had appeared in Europe since the revival of letters, Richard Bentley. The manuscript was in Bentley's keeping. Boyle wished it to be collated. A mischief-making bookseller informed him that Bentley had refused to lend it, which was false, and also that Bentley had spoken contemptuously of the letters attributed to Phalaris, and of the critics who were taken in by such counterfeits, which was perfectly true. Boyle, much provoked, paid, in his preface, a bitterly ironical compliment to Bentley's courtesy. Bentley revenged himself by a short dissertation, in which he proved that the epistles were spurious, and the new edition of them worthless: but he treated Boyle personally with civility as a young gentleman of great hopes, whose love of learning was highly commendable, and who deserved to have had better instructors.

Few things in literary history are more extraordinary than the storm which this little dissertation raised. Bentley had treated Boyle with forbearance; but he had treated Christ Church with contempt; and the Christ Churchmen, wherever dispersed, were as much attached to their college as a Scotchman to his country or a Jesuit to his order. Their influence was great. They were dominant at Oxford, powerful in the Inns of Court and in the College of Physicians, conspicuous in Parliament and in the literary and fashionable circles of London. Their unanimous cry was, that the honor of the college must be vindicated, that the insolent Cambridge pedant must be put down. Poor Boyle was unequal to the task and disinclined to it. It was therefore assigned to his tutor, Atterbury.

The answer to Bentley, which bears the name of Boyle, but which was, in truth, no more the work of Boyle than the letters to which the controversy related were the work of Phalaris, is now read only by the curious, and will in all probability never be printed again. But it had its day of noisy popularity. It was to be found not only in the studies of men of letters, but on the tables of the most brilliant drawing-rooms of Soho Square and Covent Garden. Even the beaus and coquettes of that age, the Wildairs and the Lady Lurewells, the Mirabels, and the Millamants, congratulated each other on the way in which the gay young gentleman, whose erudition sat so easily upon him, and who wrote with so much pleasantry and good breeding about the Attic dialect and the anapæstic measure, Sicilian talents and Thericlean cups, had bantered the queer prig of a doctor. Nor was the applause of the multitude undeserved. The book is, indeed, Atterbury's masterpiece, and gives a higher notion of his powers than any of those works to which he put his name. That he was altogether wrong on the main question, and on all the collateral questions springing out of it, that his knowledge of the language, the literature, and

the history of Greece, was not equal to what many freshmen now bring up every year to Cambridge and Oxford, and that some of his blunders seem rather to deserve a flogging than a refutation, is true; and therefore it is that his performance is, in the highest degree, interesting and valuable to the judicious reader. It is good by reason of its exceeding badness. It is the most extraordinary instance that exists of the art of making much show with little substance. There is no difficulty, says the steward of Moliere's miser, in giving a fine dinner with plenty of money; the really great cook is he who can set out a banquet with no money at all. That Bentley should have written excellently on ancient chronology and geography, on the development of the Greek language, and the origin of the Greek drama, is not strange. But that Atterbury should, during some years, have been thought to have treated these subjects much better than Bentley, is strange indeed. It is true that the champion of Christ Church had all the help which the most celebrated members of that society could give him. Smalridge contributed some very good wit; Friend and others some very bad archæology and philology. But the greater part of the volume was entirely Atterbury's; what was not his own was revised and retouched by him; and the whole bears the mark of his mind, a mind inexhaustibly rich in all the resources of controversy, and familiar with all the artifices which make falsehood look like truth, and ignorance like knowledge. He had little gold; but he beat that little out to the very thinnest leaf, and spread it over so vast a surface, that to those who judged by a glance, and who did not resort to balances and tests, the glittering heap of worthless matter which he produced seemed to be an inestimable treasure of massy bullion. Such arguments as he had he placed in the clearest light. Where he had no arguments, he resorted to personalities, sometimes serious, generally ludicrous, always clever and cutting. But whether he

was grave or merry, whether he reasoned or sneered, his style was always pure, polished, and easy.

Party spirit then ran high; yet though Bentley ranked among Whigs, and Christ Church was a strong-hold of Toryism, Whigs joined with Tories in applauding Atterbury's volume. Garth insulted Bentley and extolled Boyle in lines which are now never quoted except to be laughed at. Swift, in his Battle of the Books, introduced with much pleasantry Boyle, clad in armor, the gift of all the gods, and directed by Apollo in the form of a human friend, for whose name a blank is left which may easily be filled up. The youth, so accoutred and so assisted, gains an easy victory over his uncourteous and boastful antagonist. Bentley, meanwhile, was supported by the consciousness of an immeasurable superiority, and encouraged by the voices of the few who were really competent to judge the combat. "No man," he said, justly and nobly, "was ever written down but by himself." He spent two years in preparing a reply which will never cease to be read and prized while the literature of ancient Greece is studied in any part of the world. This reply proved not only that the letters ascribed to Phalaris were spurious, but that Atterbury, with all his wit, his eloquence, his skill in controversial fence, was the most audacious pretender that ever wrote about what he did not understand. But to Atterbury this exposure was matter of indifference. He was now engaged in a dispute about matters far more important and exciting than the laws of Zaleucus and the laws of Charondas. The rage of religious factions was extreme. High-church and low-church divided the nation. The great majority of the clergy were on the high-church side; the majority of King William's bishops were inclined to latitudinarianism. A dispute arose between the two parties touching the extent of the powers of the Lower House of Convocation. Atterbury eagerly thrust himself into the front rank of the high-churchmen. Those

who take a comprehensive and impartial view of his whole career, will not be disposed to give him credit for religious zeal. But it was his nature to be vehement and pugnacious in the cause of every fraternity of which he was a member. He had defended the genuineness of a spurious book simply because Christ Church had put forth an edition of that book; but now stood up for the clergy against the civil power, simply because he was a clergyman; and for the priests against the Episcopal order simply because he was as yet only a priest. He asserted the pretensions of the class to which he belonged in several treatises written with much wit, ingenuity, audacity and acrimony. In this, as in his first controversy, he was opposed to antagonists whose knowledge of the subject in dispute was far superior to his; but in this, as in his first controversy, he imposed on the multitude by bold assertion, by sarcasm, by declamation, and, above all, by his peculiar knack of exhibiting a little erudition in such a manner as to make it look like a great deal. Having passed himself off on the world as a greater master of classical learning than Bentley, he now passed himself off as a greater master of ecclesiastical learning than Wake or Gibson. By the great body of the clergy he was regarded as the ablest and most intrepid tribune that had ever defended their rights against the oligarchy of prelates. The Lower House of Convocation voted him thanks for his services; the University of Oxford created him a doctor of divinity; and soon after the accession of Anne, while the Tories still had the chief weight in the government, he was promoted to the deanery of Carlisle.

Soon after he had obtained this preferment, the Whig party rose to ascendency in the state. From that party he could expect no favor. Six years elapsed before a change of fortune took place. At length, in the year 1710, the prosecution of Sacheverell produced a formidable explosion of high-church fanaticism. At such a moment Atterbury could not fail to be conspicuous. His inordinate zeal for

the body to which he belonged, his turbulent and aspiring temper, his rare talents for agitation and for controversy were again signally displayed. He bore a chief part in framing that artful and eloquent speech which the accused divine pronounced at the bar of the Lords, and which presents a singular contrast to the absurd and scurrilous sermon which had very unwisely been honored with impeachment. During the troubled and anxious months which followed the trial, Atterbury was among the most active of those pamphleteers who inflamed the nation against the Whig ministry and the Whig parliament. When the ministry had been changed and the parliament dissolved, rewards were showered upon him. The Lower House of Convocation elected him prolocutor. The Queen appointed him Dean of Christ Church on the death of his old friend and patron Aldrich. The college would have preferred a gentler ruler. Nevertheless, the new head was received with every mark of honor. A congratulatory oration in Latin was addressed to him in the magnificent vestibule of the hall; and he in reply professed the warmest attachment to the venerable house in which he had been educated, and paid many gracious compliments to those over whom he was to preside. But it was not in his nature to be a mild or an equitable governor. He had left the chapter of Carlisle distracted by quarrels. He found Christ Church at peace; but in three months his despotic and contentious temper did at Christ Church what it had done at Carlisle. He was succeeded in both his deaneries by the humane and accomplished Smalridge, who gently complained of the state in which both had been left. "Atterbury goes before and sets every thing on fire. I come after him with a bucket of water." It was said by Atterbury's enemies that he was made a bishop because he was so bad a dean. Under his administration Christ Church was in confusion, scandalous altercations took place, opprobrious words were exchanged; and there was

reason to fear that the great Tory college would be ruined by the tyranny of the great Tory doctor. He was soon removed to the bishopric of Rochester, which was then always united with the deanery of Westminster. Still higher dignities seemed to be before him. For, though there were many able men on the episcopal bench, there was none who equalled or approached him in parliamentary talents. Had his party continued in power, it is not improbable that he would have been raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury. The more splendid his prospects, the more reason he had to dread the accession of a family which was well known to be partial to the Whigs. There is every reason to believe that he was one of those politicians who hoped that they might be able, during the life of Anne, to prepare matters in such a way that at her decease there might be little difficulty in setting aside the Act of Settlement and placing the Pretender on the throne. Her sudden death confounded the projects of these conspirators. Atterbury, who wanted no kind of courage, implored his confederates to proclaim James III., and offered to accompany the heralds in lawn sleeves. But he found even the bravest soldiers of his party irresolute, and exclaimed, not, it is said, without interjections which ill became the mouth of a father of the church, that the best of all causes and the most precious of all moments had been pusillanimously thrown away. He acquiesced in what he could not prevent, took the oaths to the House of Hanover, and at the coronation officiated with the outward show of zeal, and did his best to ingratiate himself with the royal family. But his servility was requited with cold contempt. No creature is so revengeful as a proud man who has humbled himself in vain. Atterbury became the most factious and pertinacious of all the opponents of the government. In the House of Lords, his oratory, lucid, pointed, lively, and set off with every grace of pronunciation and of gesture, extorted the

attention and admiration even of a hostile majority. Some of the most remarkable protests which appear in the journals of the peers were drawn up by him; and in some of the bitterest of those pamphlets which called on the English to stand up for their country against the aliens who had come from beyond the seas to oppress and plunder her, critics easily detected his style. When the rebellion of 1715 broke out, he refused to sign the paper in which the bishops of the province of Canterbury declared their attachment to the Protestant succession. He busied himself in electioneering, especially at Westminster, where as dean he possessed great influence; and was, indeed, strongly suspected of having once set on a riotous mob to prevent his Whig fellow-citizens from polling.

After having been long in indirect communication with the exiled family, he, in 1717, began to correspond directly with the Pretender. The first letter of the correspondence is extant. In that letter Atterbury boasts of having, during many years past, neglected no opportunity of serving the Jacobite cause. "My daily prayer," he says, "is that you may have success. May I live to see that day, and live no longer than I do what is in my power to forward it." It is to be remembered that he who wrote thus was a man bound to set to the church of which he was overseer an example of strict probity; that he had repeatedly sworn allegiance to the House of Brunswick; that he had assisted in placing the crown on the head of George I., and that he had abjured James III., "without equivocation or mental reservation, on the true faith of a Christian."

It is agreeable to turn from his public to his private life. His turbulent spirit, wearied with faction and treason, now and then required repose, and found it in domestic endearments, and in the society of the most illustrious of the living and of the dead. Of his wife little is known: but between him and his daughter there was an affection singu-

larly close and tender. The gentleness of his manners when he was in the company of a few friends was such as seemed hardly credible to those who knew him only by his writings and speeches. The charm of his "softer hour" has been commemorated by one of those friends in imperishable verse. Though Atterbury's classical attainments were not great, his taste in English literature was excellent; and his admiration of genius was so strong that it overpowered even his political and religious antipathies. His fondness for Milton, the mortal enemy of the Stuarts and of the church, was such as to many Tories seemed a crime. On the sad night on which Addison was laid in the chapel of Henry VII., the Westminster boys remarked that Atterbury read the funeral service with peculiar tenderness and solemnity. The favorite companions, however, of the great Tory prelate were, as might have been expected, men whose politics had at least a tinge of Toryism. He lived on friendly terms with Swift, Arbuthnot, and Gay. With Prior he had a close intimacy, which some misunderstanding about public affairs at last dissolved. Pope found in Atterbury not only a warm admirer, but a most faithful, fearless, and judicious adviser. The poet was a frequent guest at the episcopal palace among the elms of Bromley, and entertained not the slightest suspicion that his host, now declining in years, confined to an easy chair by gout, and apparently devoted to literature, was deeply concerned in criminal and perilous designs against the government.

The spirit of the Jacobites had been cowed by the events of 1715. It revived in 1721. The failure of the South Sea project, the panic in the money market, the downfall of great commercial houses, the distress from which no part of the kingdom was exempt, had produced general discontent. It seemed not improbable that at such a moment an insurrection might be successful. An insurrection was planned. The streets of London were to be barricaded;

the Tower and the Bank were to be surprised; King George, his family and his chief captains and councillors were to be arrested, and King James was to be proclaimed. The design became known to the Duke of Orleans, regent of France, who was on terms of friendship with the House of Hanover. He put the English government on its guard. Some of the chief malcontents were committed to prison; and among them was Atterbury. No bishop of the Church of England had been taken into custody since that memorable day when the applauses and prayers of all London had followed the seven bishops to the gate of the Tower. The Opposition entertained some hope that it might be possible to excite among the people an enthusiasm resembling that of their fathers, who rushed into the waters of the Thames to implore the blessing of Sancroft. Pictures of the heroic confessor in his cell were exhibited at the shop windows. Verses in his praise were sung about the streets. The restraints by which he was prevented from communicating with his accomplices were represented as cruelties worthy of the dungeons of the Inquisition. Strong appeals were made to the priesthood. Would they tamely permit so gross an insult to be offered to their cloth? Would they suffer the ablest, the most eloquent member of their profession, the man who had so often stood up for their rights against the civil power, to be treated like the vilest of mankind? There was considerable excitement; but it was allayed by a temperate and artful letter to the clergy, the work, in all probability, of Bishop Gibson, who stood high in the favor of Walpole, and shortly after became minister for ecclesiastical affairs.

Atterbury remained in close confinement during some months. He had carried on his correspondence with the exiled family so cautiously that the circumstantial proofs of his guilt, though sufficient to produce entire moral conviction, were not sufficient to justify legal conviction. He could be reached only by a bill of pains and penalties.

Such a bill the Whig party, then decidedly predominant in both houses, was quite prepared to support. Many hot-headed members of that party were eager to follow the precedent which had been set in the case of Sir John Fenwick, and to pass an act for cutting off the bishop's head. Cadogan, who commanded the army, a brave soldier, but a headstrong politician, is said to have exclaimed, with great vehemence: "Fling him to the lions in the Tower." But the wiser and more humane Walpole was always unwilling to shed blood; and his influence prevailed. When parliament met, the evidence against the bishop was laid before committees of both houses. Those committees reported that his guilt was proved. In the Commons a resolution, pronouncing him a traitor, was carried by nearly two to one. A bill was then introduced which provided that he should be deprived of his spiritual dignities, that he should be banished for life, and that no British subject should hold any intercourse with him except by the royal permission.

This bill passed the Commons with little difficulty. For the bishop, though invited to defend himself, chose to reserve his defence for the assembly of which he was a member. In the Lords the contest was sharp. The young Duke of Wharton, distinguished by his parts, his dissoluteness, and his versatility, spoke for Atterbury with great effect; and Atterbury's own voice was heard for the last time by that unfriendly audience which had so often listened to him with mingled aversion and delight. He produced few witnesses, nor did those witnesses say much that could be of service to him. Among them was Pope. He was called to prove that, while he was an inmate of the palace at Bromley, the bishop's time was completely occupied by literary and domestic matters, and that no leisure was left for plotting. But Pope, who was quite unaccustomed to speak in public, lost his head, and, as he afterwards owned,

though he had only ten words to say, made two or three blunders.

The bill finally passed the Lords by eighty-three votes to forty-three. The bishops, with a single exception, were in the majority. Their conduct drew on them a sharp taunt from Lord Bathurst, a warm friend of Atterbury and a zealous Tory. "The wild Indians" he said, "give no quarter, because they believe that they shall inherit the skill and prowess of every adversary whom they destroy. Perhaps the animosity of the right reverend prelates to their brother, may be explained in the same way." Atterbury took leave of those whom he loved with a dignity and tenderness worthy of a better man. Three fine lines of his favorite poet were often in his mouth:—

> "Some natural tears he dropped but wiped them soon:
> The world was all before him, where to choose
> His place of rest, and Providence his guide."

At parting he presented Pope with a Bible, and said, with a disingenuousness of which no man who had studied the Bible to much purpose would have been guilty: "If ever you learn that I have any dealings with the Pretender, I give you leave to say that my punishment is just." Pope, at this time, really believed the bishop to be an injured man. Arbuthnot seems to have been of the same opinion. Swift, a few months later, ridiculed with great bitterness in the Voyage to Laputa, the evidence which had satisfied the two houses of parliament. Soon, however, the most partial friends of the banished prelate ceased to assert his innocence, and contented themselves with lamenting and excusing what they could not defend. After a short stay at Brussels, he had taken up his abode at Paris, and had become the leading man among the Jacobite refugees who were assembled there. He was invited to Rome by the Pretender, who there held his mock court under the immediate protec-

tion of the Pope. But Atterbury felt that a bishop of the Church of England would be strangely out of place at the Vatican, and declined the invitation. During some months, however, he might flatter himself that he stood high in the good graces of James. The correspondence between the master and the servant was constant. Atterbury's merits were warmly acknowledged, his advice was respectfully received, and he was, as Bolingbroke had been before him, the prime minister of a king without a kingdom. But the new favorite found, as Bolingbroke had found before him, that it was quite as hard to keep the shadow of power under a vagrant and mendicant prince as to keep the reality of power at Westminster. Though James had neither territories nor revenues, neither army nor navy, there was more faction and more intrigue among his courtiers than among those of his successful rival. Atterbury soon perceived that his counsels were disregarded, if not distrusted. His proud spirit was deeply wounded. He quitted Paris, fixed his residence at Montpelier, gave up politics, and devoted himself entirely to letters. In the sixth year of his exile he had so severe an illness, that his daughter, herself in very delicate health, determined to run all risks that she might see him once more. Having obtained a license from the English government, she went by sea to Bordeaux, but landed there in such a state that she could travel only by boat or in a litter. Her father, in spite of his infirmities, set out from Montpelier to meet her; and she, with the impatience which is often the sign of approaching death, hastened towards him. Those who were about her in vain implored her to travel slowly. She said that every hour was precious, that she only wished to see her papa and to die. She met him at Toulouse, embraced him, received from his hand the sacred bread and wine, and thanked God that they had passed one day in each other's society before they parted for ever. She died that night.

It was some time before even the strong mind of Atterbury recovered from this cruel blow. As soon as he was himself again, he became eager for action and conflict: for grief, which disposes gentle natures to retirement, to inaction, and to meditation, only makes restless spirits more restless. The Pretender, dull and bigoted as he was, had found out that he had not acted wisely in parting with one who, though a heretic, was, in abilities and accomplishments, the foremost man of the Jacobite party. The bishop was courted back, and was without much difficulty induced to return to Paris and to become once more the phantom minister of a phantom monarchy. But his long and troubled life was drawing to a close. To the last, however, his intellect retained all its keenness and vigor. He learned, in the ninth year of his banishment, that he had been accused by Oldmixon, as dishonest and malignant a scribbler as any that has been saved from oblivion by the Dunciad, of having, in concert with other Christ Churchmen, garbled Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. The charge, as respected Atterbury, had not the slightest foundation; for he was not one of the editors of the History, and never saw it till it was printed. He published a short vindication of himself, which is a model in its kind, luminous, temperate, and dignified. A copy of this little work he sent to the Pretender, with a letter singularly eloquent and graceful. It was impossible, the old man said, that he should write any thing on such a subject, without being reminded of the resemblance between his own fate and that of Clarendon. They were the only two English subjects that had ever been banished from their country, and debarred from all communication with their friends by act of parliament. But here the resemblance ended. One of the exiles had been so happy as to bear a chief part in the restoration of the Royal house. All that the other could now do was to die asserting the rights of that house to the last. A few weeks after this let-

ter was written Atterbury died. He had just completed his seventieth year.

His body was brought to England, and laid with great privacy under the nave of Westminster Abbey. Only three mourners followed the coffin. No inscription marks the grave. That the epitaph with which Pope honored the memory of his friend does not appear on the walls of the great national cemetery, is no subject of regret: for nothing worse was ever written by Colley Cibber. Those who wish for more complete information about Atterbury, may easily collect it from his sermons and his controversial writings, from the report of the parliamentary proceedings against him, which will be found in the State Trials; from the five volumes of his correspondence, edited by Mr. Nichols, and from the first volume of the Stuart papers, edited by Mr. Glover. A very indulgent, but a very interesting account of the Bishop's political career will be found in Lord Mahon's valuable History of England.

FRANCIS BACON,

VISCOUNT ST. ALBANS AND BARON VERULAM.

THIS illustrious man was born in London on the twenty-second of January, 1561. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, a courtier, a lawyer, and a man of erudition, stood high in the favor of Queen Elizabeth, and was lord-keeper during twenty years of her reign. Anne, the second wife of Sir Nicholas, and the philosopher's mother, was the daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, Edward the Sixth's tutor, and was herself distinguished among the learned females of the time. One of her sisters became the wife of Elizabeth's celebrated treasurer, Lord Burleigh. Delicate in health, and devoted to sedentary employment, Francis Bacon exhibited in early boyhood the dawning of those powers whose versatility afterwards became not less remarkable than their strength. As a child he delighted the queen with his precocious gravity and readiness of speech; and before he had completed his twelfth year we see him investigating the cause of a singular echo in a conduit, and endeavoring to penetrate the mystery of a juggler who performed in his father's house. At the age of thirteen he was matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, of which Whitgift was then master; but his residence at the University lasted scarcely three years, and his writings contain many expressions of

dissatisfaction with the current system of academical education. In his sixteenth year he was sent abroad, and lived for some time at Paris, under the charge of the English ambassador, Sir Amias Paulett; after which he visited the French provinces, and added to his literary and philosophical studies an acquaintance with foreign policy and statistics, the fruit of which soon appeared in his tract upon the state of Europe. In February, 1580, his father died, and he immediately returned to England.

Sir Nicholas left but a scanty fortune; and his son Francis, the youngest of a large family, found himself obliged, in his twentieth year, to devise the means of earning a livelihood. It might have been thought that friends could not have been wanting to one who, besides his own acknowledged merit, had it in his power to urge the long and honorable services of his father, while his uncle was the prime minister of the kingdom. Of the patronage which thus seemed to be at his command, Bacon attempted to avail himself, desiring to obtain such a public employment as might enable him to unite political activity in some degree with literary study. But his suit was received neglectfully by the queen, and harshly repulsed by his kinsman. Although all the causes of this conduct may not be discoverable, a few lie at the surface. The lord-keeper had, in the later years of his life, lost the royal favor. Burleigh, besides his notorious contempt for men of letters, had to provide for sons of his own, to whom their accomplished cousin might have proved a dangerous rival. From the Cecils, indeed, Bacon never derived any efficient aid, till he had forced his way upwards in spite of them; and there are evident traces of jealousy and dislike in the mode in which he was treated both by the old treasurer, and by his second son, Robert.

Obliged, therefore, to betake himself to the law, Bacon was admitted at Gray's Inn, where he spent several years obscurely in the study of his profession, but with increasing

practice at the bar. The friendship of his fellow lawyers, earned by his amiable disposition and his activity in the affairs of the society, bestowed on him offices in his inn of court; but his kinsmen were still cold and haughty. Lord Burleigh continued to write him letters of reproof; and Robert Cecil, already a rising statesman, sneered at speculative intellects, and insinuated their unfitness for the business of life. In 1590, when Bacon was in his thirtieth year, he was visited for the first time with court favor, receiving then an honorary appointment as queen's counsel extraordinary; and to this was added a grant of the reversion of a clerkship in the star-chamber, which did not become vacant for eighteen years. But the lawyer's heart was not in his task. His brilliant professional success, and the awakening friendship of his relations, merely suggested to him renewed attempts to escape from the drudgery of the bar. His views are nobly expressed in a letter which he addressed to the lord-treasurer the year after his appointment.[1] We

[1] "I was now somewhat ancient; one and thirty years is a great deal of sand in the hour-glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed, and I do not fear that action shall impair it; because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bear a mind, in some middle place that I could discharge, to serve her majesty; not as a man born under Sol that loveth honor, nor under Jupiter that loveth business, for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly; but as a man born under an excellent sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of all men's abilities. . . . . Again, the meanness of my estate doth somewhat move me; for, though I cannot accuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends, as I have moderate civil ends; *for I have taken all knowledge to be my province;* and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers — whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments, and auricular traditions and impostures, have committed so many spoils, — I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries; the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity, or vainglory, or nature, or (if one take it more favorably) philanthropia, is so fixed

linger with melancholy pleasure over these abortive efforts made by one of the finest and most capacious of intellects to extricate itself from that labyrinth of worldly turmoil, in which its owner was destined to purchase rank and splendor at the expense of moral degradation and final ruin.

We are henceforth to behold Bacon actively engaged in political life, as well as in the duties of his profession. Two parties then divided the court, equally remarkable in different ways on account of those who headed them. Burleigh was the chief of the queen's old counsellors, on whom, amidst all her caprices, she always had the prudence to rely for the real business of the state: the young and gay, who aspired to be ranked as the personal friends or adorers of the withered sovereign of hearts, were led by the high-spirited and imprudent Earl of Essex. To the party of this nobleman Bacon decidedly attached himself, and soon indeed shared with his own elder brother Anthony, the earl's most private confidence. Valuable advisers were they to their rash patron, and a valuable servant of the nation did Francis Bacon bid fair to become, when, in November, 1592, he entered parliament as one of the knights of the shire for Middlesex. His first speech, in February following, contained an urgent pleading for improvements in the law; in another address, delivered in March, he resisted, with exceeding boldness as well as force of reason, the immediate levying of an unpopular subsidy to which the House had already consented. The young lawyer's exposition of unpleasant truths gave deep offence to the queen. His uncle and the lord-keeper were both commissioned to convey to him the assurance of

in my mind, as it cannot be removed. . . . . *And if your lordship will not carry me on,* I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation into voluntary poverty; but *this I will do,—I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain, that shall be executed by deputy; and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry bookmaker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth, which, he said, lay so deep.*"—(Calaba, p. 18. Bacon's Works, Vol. XII. p. 6, 7, Montagu's edit.)

the royal displeasure; and the two humble, nay, crouching letters of apology, still extant, in which he entreated those ministers to procure his pardon, did not forbode much independence in his subsequent conduct. We do not, indeed, hear Bacon named as a champion of popular rights.

In the year 1594, Sir Edward Coke being made attorney-general, the solicitorship became vacant; and Bacon's application for the office was strenuously supported by Essex. But all efforts were in vain. The powerful kinsmen were colder than ever towards one who had chosen another patron. The lord-keeper, Puckering, acted in a manner which drew on him a spirited rebuke from the candidate. The queen hesitated, coquetted, told Essex that his friend, though witty, eloquent, and in some branches learned, was a showy lawyer rather than a profound one. After a delay of many months the place was given to a plodding sergeant, and Bacon's generous patron, vexed at the disappointment of his hopes, sought to console both him and himself by a gift equally munificent and delicate. Bacon received from him an estate at Twickenham, worth about eighteen hundred pounds. The present, in all likelihood, came very seasonably; for he appears to have been already involved in those pecuniary embarrassments from which he was never afterwards completely able to extricate himself. He was obliged to sell the land which Essex had given him; two years later he was arrested in the street for a debt of three hundred pounds; and among the Lord Chancellor Ellesmere's papers, recently published, there is a curious acknowledgment, granted in 1604, for a pledge in security of an advance of fifty pounds to him. These reasons offer the only apology for the addresses which, about the time of his arrest, he paid to a wealthy and shrewish widow, who, fortunately for him, preferred his professional brother and personal enemy, Sir Edward Coke. In the mean time his legal reputation continued to increase, and his parliamentary exertions

were unremitted, though altogether free from that independence which once characterized them. We thus trace Bacon down to his thirty-ninth year, pausing only to remark, that two years earlier, that is, in 1597, his celebrated *Essays* were first published. Although merely the skeleton of what they afterwards became, these compositions gained high reputation for their author, not only at home, but also on the continent.

After this, the first step in Bacon's literary career, we approach what is the most painful task of his biographer, a dark page of his history, over which no ingenuity has ever been able to throw a veil thick enough to disguise its foulness. We have seen him the friend, the adviser, the grateful vassal of Essex; we are now to behold him deserting his benefactor, assisting to destroy him, standing forth in the face of the world as his enemy and accuser. The philosopher's latest biographer has pronounced his conduct in this matter to be honorable and praiseworthy; and to his pages we must refer those who are curious to canvass arguments of which we ourselves are unable to discover the force. Bacon, unfortunately for himself, had lately risen much in royal favor, and been greatly trusted and employed. Accordingly, in the first stages of Essex's decline, he had to act a double part, — now offering to his patron advices which were but seldom followed, now seeking excuses to pacify the queen's rising displeasure. His natural inclination for temporizing, the success which had hitherto attended his cautious policy, the honest wish to serve his generous friend, — all these reasons may have concurred in tempting him to embark in the dangerous channel. But the sunken rocks soon encompassed him, and shipwreck was unavoidable. Alienation either from Elizabeth or from Essex speedily appeared to be the necessary result of the position into which the parties were coming. Bacon had not the courage to take the nobler part, and place himself by the side of his falling

friend, at the probable expense of all his worldly prospects. Suspicion and estrangement soon took the place of affectionate confidence; and the trust reposed in him by the Queen was purchased by the bitter consciousness that Essex regarded him as treacherous and hostile. A more degrading task was yet to come. The first trial of the earl, in reference to his conduct in Ireland, was determined upon; and Bacon's enemies asserted that he offered himself to act as one of the counsel for the prosecution. In that memoir in defence of his conduct which he wrote in the next reign, and which proves satisfactorily nothing but his own humiliating consciousness of guilt, he states as to this matter what was doubtless the truth. It had been resolved that the proceedings against the rash earl should not be carried out to his destruction, but should only disarm and discourage him; and, a hint being conveyed to Bacon that the Queen had not determined whether he should be employed professionally in the affair or not, he thought proper to address to her "two or three words of compliment," intimating that if she would dispense with his services he would consider it as one of her greatest favors, but that otherwise he knew his duty, and would not allow any private obligations to interfere with what he owed to her majesty. All this was, he adds, "a respect no man that had his wits could have omitted." Bacon, in short, still wished to serve two masters; but he had now placed himself at the mercy of those from whom he had no forbearance to expect. The Queen, suspicious and moody, was jealous of his attachment to Essex, and bent on compelling him to do her service unreservedly; her advisers, or some of them, were glad to have the odium of the earl's destruction shared with them by one so distinguished, who had, likewise, been the victim's friend. It was intimated that Bacon's services could not be dispensed with; but he tells us, (and he probably repeats only what his masters tried to make him believe,) that it was

resolved his share in the prosecution should be confined to matters which could not do his unfortunate patron any serious harm. Essex's private censure by the privy-council followed; and, while he was committed to custody-at-large, Bacon incurred, by his appearance against him, an obloquy of which his letters show him to have been painfully sensible. In a few months the earl's open rebellion took place; he was seized, and put upon his trial in February, 1601, along with Lord Southampton; and on this occasion, when his life was at stake, Bacon again appeared as one of the counsel for the prosecution, and delivered a speech of which there is extant an imperfect account. The language is harsh, but less so than addresses of the kind used to be in those days. The topics are oratorical, and, as it has been justly remarked, are less calculated for insuring conviction, (which indeed was certain,) than for placing the conduct of the prisoner in an odious light, and hardening the Queen's heart against him; and, although it would be rash to judge of the real temper of the harangue without knowing more of its contents, yet what we possess contains much that cannot possibly be explained so as to do credit to the speaker. We know, likewise, how the object of the attack received it. At one place Essex interrupted his treacherous friend, and called upon him to say, as a witness, whether he had not, in their confidential intercourse, admitted the truth of those excuses which he now affected to treat as frivolous and false. Essex was convicted; and between his sentence and execution, Bacon admits in his exculpatory memoir that he made no attempt to save him; seeing the queen but once, as he says, and on that occasion venturing to do nothing further than pronouncing a few commonplaces on the blessed uses of mercy. But not even here was the disgrace to end, in which the timid man of the world had steeped himself. The act which had cost Elizabeth's own heart so much, had also made her unpopular; a defence of the royal

policy in regard to Essex was thought necessary; and the pen that drew it up, under the direction of the Queen's advisers, was, we are grieved to find, no other than Bacon's. The "Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert Earl of Essex" was printed, and is extant: "a performance," says a late writer, "in defence of which, in the succeeding reign, Bacon had not a word to say; a performance abounding in expressions which no generous enemy would have employed respecting a man who had so dearly expiated his offences." With this humiliating act of service we may consider Bacon's public life under Elizabeth as closed.

The reign of her successor was, from its commencement, a more auspicious era for men of letters and philosophy, with whom James, amidst all his imbecility and coldheartedness, was not by any means ill fitted to sympathize. Bacon's learning was no longer open to sneers and contempt; his uncle was dead; his hunchback cousin, Robert Cecil, who soon became Earl of Salisbury, was kept in check by his hereditary prudence; and Coke, who had insulted our philosophic lawyer grossly, as he insulted every one who was defenceless and within his reach, was in a few years removed to the head of the Court of Common Pleas. From the first hour of James's reign, Bacon lost no opportunity of recommending himself to favor; but the first mark of it which he received, was one of which he neither was nor could have been proud, and which, nevertheless, he thought proper to solicit. When the king called upon all persons possessing forty pounds a year in land to be knighted, or to compound for a dispensation from the honor, one effect of this scheme for filling the royal coffers was, that three members of Bacon's mess at Gray's Inn appeared among the new knights. That love of external distinctions which was the fatal weakness of his nature, was called into play, and the philosopher was disconcerted by

the titles of his companions, beside whom he sat untitled. At the same time, likewise, he had, in his own words, "found out an alderman's daughter, a handsome maiden, to his liking;" and the alderman's daughter was likely to be more easily won if her admirer could offer her a showy accession of rank. Accordingly, Bacon wrote to his cousin Cecil, stating his desire to obtain, for these reasons, "this divulged and almost prostituted title of knighthood." The request was granted, but was immediately followed by another. Bacon, heartily ashamed of the company in which he was to appear, entreated that he might be knighted alone; "that," as he says, "the manner might be such as might grace one, since the matter will not." This petition was refused; and, on the day of the coronation, Francis Bacon was one of three hundred who received the empty honor. Soon afterwards, being forty-two years old, he was married to the alderman's daughter, Alice Barnham, who brought him a considerable fortune, but seems, in the latter part of his life at all events, to have contributed little to his domestic happiness.

These details are in themselves trifles; but they are strange illustrations of the mixed character of one who, while thus soliciting honors of which he was half ashamed, and eager for public distinctions, which, though more solid, were likewise more dangerous, was not only respected and distinguished as a lawyer and a statesman, as an orator, a scholar, and an author, but was occupied, during his few hours of leisure, in completing the most valuable system of philosophy that had ever been expounded in modern Europe. Smaller compositions, submitted to his friends, showed from time to time the progress of the great work which he had marked out as the business of his life; and among these was the treatise on the *Advancement of Learning*, published in 1605, in its author's forty-fifth year. Political tracts alternated with these philosophical speculations.

In the mean time his public reputation, and his favor with the king increased and kept pace with each other. In parliament he was actively useful in forwarding favorite and really good measures of the court, such as the union of England and Scotland, and the proposed consolidation of the laws of the countries. Nor was he less usefully employed in taking a prominent part in the select committee of the house upon grievances; and in his skilful hands, the report became all that the rules could have wished, without exciting any general feeling against the framers. In 1604, he was made king's counsel in ordinary, with a salary of forty pounds, to which was added a pension of sixty pounds. In 1607, upon Coke's promotion to the bench, Bacon was appointed solicitor-general; and he became attorney-general in 1612. His treatises concerning improvements in the law, and the principles of legislation, are more creditable testimonies to the value of his official services, than some others of his acts; such as the scheme, first tried in the session of 1614, for securing majorities in the House of Commons by organized corruption, the invention of which has been recently traced to him, although in his place in parliament he ridiculed those who asserted that such a project had ever been formed. Bacon was likewise officially the prosecutor of Oliver St. John, of Owen and Talbot, and of the old clergyman, Peacham, who was examined in the Tower under torture, the founder of modern philosophy being present, and putting the questions. In Peacham's case there was even an attempt, actively promoted by Bacon, for securing a conviction by previous conference with the judges; a plot which, though at length successful, was defeated for a time by the sturdy resistance of Coke, a tyrant to his inferiors, but a staunch opponent of encroachments upon judicial independence. Bacon's last remarkable appearance as attorney-general, was in the noted trial of the earl and countess of Somerset, and their accomplices, for

the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury; and, whatever the foul secret may have been, which was involved in that fiendish intrigue, Bacon's letters to the king leave little reason for doubting that he at least was in possession of it. His conduct in this matter, however, gained him great and deserved credit.

The fall of Somerset was followed by the rise of the new favorite, Villiers, who had already profited by his intimacy with the attorney-general, and by the sound advices with which the cautious statesman endeavored to fortify his youth and inexperience. The worthless Buckingham, destined in a few years to be the instrument of retribution for Bacon's past desertion of Essex, did not for some time forget obligations, of which he was probably wise enough to desire a continuance. In 1616, Bacon having been sworn of the privy-council, relinquished the bar, but retained his chamber practice. In the spring of 1617, the Lord Chancellor Ellesmere resigned the seals, which were immediately delivered to Bacon, with the title of lord-keeper. In January of the succeeding year, he was made lord high chancellor of England, and in July was raised to the peerage as Baron of Verulam. His higher title of Viscount St. Albans was not conferred on him till 1621. Without neglecting his political duties, he proceeded zealously to the judicial functions of his office, in which arrears of business had accumulated through the infirmities of his aged predecessor. "This day," wrote he to Buckingham in June, 1617, "I have made even with the business of the kingdom for common justice; not one cause unheard; the lawyers drawn dry of all the motions they were to make; not one petition unanswered. And this, I think, could not be said in our age before. Thus I speak, not out of ostentation, but out of gladness, when I have done my duty. I know men think I cannot continue, if I should thus oppress myself with business; but that account is made. The duties of life are

more than life; and if I die now I shall die before the world be weary of me." And the man who wrote in this solemn, moral strain, the man whose writings throughout are an echo of the same lofty expression of the sense of duty, was also the man who, in less than four years after his elevation to the seat of justice, was to be hurled from it in disgrace, branded as a bribed and dishonest man. "At York House," says Mr. Montague, "on the 22d of January, 1621, he celebrated his sixtieth birthday, surrounded by his admirers and friends, among whom was Ben Jonson, who composed a poem in honor of the day.

> Hail, happy genius of this ancient pile!
> How comes it all things so about thee smile —
> The fire, the wine, the men — and in the midst
> Thou stand'st, as if some mystery thou didst?

"Had the poet been a prophet, he would have described the good genius of the mansion not exulting, but dejected, humble, and about to depart forever."

He had now arrived at the conviction that his worship of the powers of this world had made it impossible for him to consummate the great sacrifice which, during his lifetime, he had hoped to lay upon the altar of philosophy. Aged sixty years, and immersed in difficult and anxious business, he felt that his great Restoration of Science, his *Instauratio Magna*, could not be completed; and he therefore hastened to give to the world an outline of its plan, coupled with a filling up of one section of the outline. "I number my days," wrote he, "and would have it saved." The *Novum Organum*, the result of this determination, was published in October, 1620; and the fame which it earned for its author throughout Europe, was in its rising splendor when his fall took place.

The tempest which was soon to overturn the throne was already lowering on the horizon; and its earliest mutterings

were heard in the important parliament which met on the 30th of January, 1621. With most of the complaints, whose investigation the king and Buckingham feared so much, we have here little to do: but two gross abuses there were, in which the lord chancellor was personally implicated. He had passed the infamous patents of monopoly, of which the worst were those held by Sir Giles Mompesson, (Massinger's Overreach,) and by Sir Francis Michell, and shared by Buckingham's brothers and dependents: and he had allowed himself to be influenced in his judicial sentences by recommendations of the favorite. The first of these faults admitted of palliation; the second was susceptible of none; but both were real and heavy offences. Yet neither was made an article of charge against Bacon. He was attacked upon a different ground. Buckingham, by the advice of his new counsellor Williams, then dean of Westminster, abandoned the monopolists to their fate, contenting himself with sending his own brothers out of the country, and with afterwards publicly denying that he had any hand in assisting their escape. But the storm was not allayed. In March, the parliamentary committee appointed to inquire into the existence of abuses in the courts of justice, reported that abuses did exist, and that the person against whom they were alleged, was the lord chancellor himself. Two cases were specified, of suitors named Aubrey and Egerton, of whom the one had given the chancellor one hundred pounds, the other four hundred pounds, and against whom he had decided, notwithstanding these presents. Two days after this report was presented, Lord St. Albans presided in the House of Lords for the last time. New accusations accumulated against him; and, alarmed in mind, and sick in body, he retired from the house, and addressed to the peers a letter, praying for a suspension of their opinion, until he should have undergone a fair trial. In no long time the charges against him amounted to twenty-three; and Williams, again

called to the councils of Buckingham and his master, advised that no risks should be incurred upon his account. A prorogation of parliament ensued, during which an interview took place between the king and the chancellor; and James, instead of encouraging his accused servant in the resolution he had expressed of defending himself, recommended "that he should submit himself to the House of Peers, and that upon his princely word he would restore him again, if they in their honors should not be sensible of his merits." On the 24th of April there was presented to the Lords, by the Prince of Wales, a supplication and submission of the lord chancellor, in which the most important passage is the following: "It resteth, therefore, that, without fig leaves, I do ingenuously confess and acknowledge that, having understood the particulars of the charge, not formally from the house, but enough to inform my conscience and memory, I find matter sufficient and full, both to move me to desert my defence, and to move your lordships to condemn and censure me. Neither will I trouble your lordships by singling those particulars, which I think may fall off.

Quid te exempta juvat spinis de pluribus una?

Neither will I prompt your lordships to observe upon the proofs, where they come not home, or the scruples touching the credits of the witnesses; neither will I represent unto your lordships how far a defence might, in diverse things, extenuate the offence, in respect of the time or manner of the gift, or the like circumstances; but only leave these things to spring out of your own noble thoughts, and observations of the evidence and examinations themselves, and charitably to wind about the particulars of the charge here and there, as God shall put it in your minds; and so submit myself wholly to your piety and grace. . . . . And, therefore, my humble suit to your lordships is, that my penitent submission may be my sentence, and the loss of the seal my

punishment; and that your lordships will spare any further sentence, but recommend me to his majesty's grace and pardon for all that is past." But not even thus was the humiliation complete. The house resolved that the submission was not specific, nor unequivocal enough to be satisfactory; and that he should be required to furnish categorical answers to the several articles of charge, which accordingly were sent to him, being numbered under twenty-three heads. The specific answers which he returned were prefaced and followed by these declarations: "Upon advised consideration of the charge, descending into my own conscience, and calling my memory to account, so far as I am able, I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence, and put myself upon the grace and mercy of your lordships. . . . . This declaration I have made to your lordships with a sincere mind; humbly craving that, if there should be any mistake, your lordships would impute it to want of memory, and not to any desire of mine to obscure truth, or palliate any thing. For I do again confess, that in the points charged upon me, although they should be taken as myself have declared them, there is a great deal of corruption and neglect, for which I am heartily and penitently sorry, and submit myself to the judgment, grace, and mercy of the court. — For extenuation, I will use none, concerning the matters themselves: only it may please your lordships, out of your nobleness, to cast your eyes of compassion upon my person and estate. I was never noted for an avaricious man, and the apostle saith, that covetousness is the root of all evil. I hope also that your lordships do the rather find me in the state of grace; for that, in all these particulars, there are few or none that are not almost two years old, whereas those that have a habit of corruption do commonly wax worse and worse; so that it hath pleased God to prepare me, by precedent degrees of amendment, to my present penitency.

And for my estate, it is so mean and poor, as my care is now chiefly to satisfy my debts."

This declaration being read, a deputation of the lords was appointed to wait on the unfortunate man in the chamber where he sat deserted and alone, and to demand whether it was his own hand that was subscribed to it. Among them was Shakespeare's friend Lord Southampton, who had been condemned to death along with Essex. Bacon replied to them, "it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech your lordships be merciful to a broken reed." Again the fallen judge prayed the king to intercede for him; and again the king, his haughty son, and their thankless favorite, refused to interfere. On the 3d of May, 1621, the lords pronounced a sentence which, stamping him at all events with indelible disgrace, was terrible even in the punishment which it actually inflicted. Bacon, found guilty upon his own confession, was sentenced to a fine of forty thousand pounds, and to confinement in the Tower during the King's pleasure; he was pronounced incapable of public employments and of sitting in parliament, and prohibited from coming within the verge of the court. His judges indeed knew that the harsher part of the sentence would not be executed. Accordingly, though committed immediately to the Tower, he was released after two days' imprisonment; and the fine was remitted in the course of the autumn, although it is a fact dishonorable (in the circumstances) to his enemy and successor, Bishop Williams, that the pardon was stayed at the seal, till the king in person ordered it to be passed.

From the whole tenor of this afflicting history, it is plain that Bacon's memory cannot be cleared from very heavy imputations. Indeed, the case against him may be stated, if we push it to the utmost, in an alternative form which admits of no honorable solution. Convicted of corruption, as he was, upon his own confession, we must either believe the confession, and pronounce him a corrupt judge, or we must

disbelieve it, and pronounce him a liar. Most of his biographers adopt the former alternative. Mr. Montagu's elaborate defence is really founded on something which is not very far distant from the latter. And humiliating as either supposition is, we have, for our own part, no hesitation in believing that the truth lies nearest to that theory which imputes to the unhappy chancellor insincerity and cowardice, rather then wilful corruption. We cannot indeed go so far as his enthusiastic biographer, who insists that the acts charged and confessed, were in themselves, if not quite free from moral blame, yet palliated, not only by general usage, but by intentions strictly honest; — that he was sacrificed by the king and the king's minion, although, if he had stood a trial, he could have obtained a full acquittal. This, we must venture to think, is a position which, if maintained to its whole extent, cannot be even plausibly defended. Neither, as we must also believe, is justice done by that other view, which has been stated more recently with such force and eloquence, that the case was one of gross bribery, gross and glaring even when compared with the ordinary course of corruption in these times; a case so bad, that the court, anxious, for their own sakes, to save the culprit, dared not to utter a word in extenuation.[1]

The fact which possesses the greatest importance for the elucidation of this unfortunate story, is that which has been founded on so elaborately by Mr. Montagu, and lately illustrated further by another writer for a different purpose.[2] The custom of giving presents was then general, not to say universal in England. It extended much further than the *épices* of the French parliament; for the gifts were not fixed in amount, nor, though always expected, were they

[1] Montagu's Life of Bacon, *Works*, Vol. XVI. part I. p. 313–377, note. *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. LXV. page 50–63. (Mr. Macaulay.)

[2] *Edinburgh Review*, No. 143, p. 38, 39. *Life of Raleigh* (Professor Napier.)

recognized as lawful perquisites. The advisers of the crown received presents from those who asked for favors: the sovereign received presents from those who approached the throne on occasions of pomp and festivity. Both these improprieties were not only universal but unchallenged. Further, judges received presents; and under certain conditions, — when, for instance, the giver had not been, and was not likely to be, a suitor in the judge's court, or even when, though he had been a suitor, the cause was ended, — this dangerous abuse was scarcely less common than the other, and scarcely regarded in a more unfavorable light. That it was wrong, all men felt; but we fear there were few indeed, who, like Sir Thomas More, refused absolutely to profit by it. High as Coke himself stood for honesty, and well as he deserved praise for this (almost his only redeeming virtue), we doubt whether his judicial character could have emerged quite untainted from a scrutiny led by common informers, discarded servants, and disappointed litigants, like that to which his unfortunate rival was subjected. Pure Bacon was not; purer than he, several of his contemporaries probably were; but we believe him to have been merely one of the offenders, and very far indeed from being the worst, in an age when corruption and profligacy, senatorial, judicial, and administrative, were almost at the acme of that excess which an indignant nation speedily rose to exterminate and avenge.

A comparison of the charges in detail, and of the evidence adduced, with Bacon's articulate answers, as to the candor of which there is no reason to doubt, would really exhibit little or nothing which, after fair allowances are made for imperfect information and other causes of obscurity, would afford a distinct contradiction to the chancellor's own solemn averment, made in a letter to the king at an early stage of the investigation. "For the briberies and gifts wherewith I am charged, when the book of hearts

shall be opened, I hope I shall not be found to have the troubled fountain of a corrupt heart, in a depraved habit of taking rewards to perfect justice; howsoever I may be frail, and partake of the abuses of the times." While he lay in the Tower, he addressed to Buckingham a letter containing these expressions: "However I have acknowledged that the sentence is just, and for reformation sake fit, I have been a trusty, and honest, and Christ-loving friend to your lordship, and the justest chancellor that hath been in the five changes since my father's time." This last sentence, indeed, when carefully weighed, will be found to contain more of truth than the writer himself perhaps intended. A judge not altogether unjust he may have been, if we compare him with his contemporaries; but he was also a trusty, and trusting, and servile friend of the royal favorite, and of other men in power. He was a lover of the pomp of the world, to an extent highly dangerous for one who had but little private fortune, insufficient official remuneration, and habits which disqualified him for exercising a strict superintendence over the expenses of his household, or the conduct of his dependents generally. His emoluments as chancellor did not amount to three thousand pounds a year; and, immediately on his appointment, he had used vain endeavors to have the office put on a more independent footing. His servants habitually betrayed both him and the suitors; but there can be no doubt that, continually embarrassed in circumstances, he himself was only too glad to receive the customary gifts when they could be taken with any semblance of propriety. As to his confession, while we believe it to be true in every particular instance, we believe it also in its general admission of corruption; but we likewise believe that the general admission ought to have been qualified by certain references, which would have established the truth of the remark made by Bacon in his hour of deepest suffering, that "they upon whom the wall fell were not the

greatest offenders in Israel." And this, as we conceive it, was the danger which the court were so eager to avert, the danger which filled the king and Buckingham with such dismay. This was their reason for insisting that Bacon should sacrifice his own character, and abandon that line of defence which might not improbably have precipitated the revolution. Upon this assumption, their conduct throughout is intelligible and consistent; and although one is reluctant to believe it, the assumption is not contradicted by any thing in the chancellor's character. Lofty as may still have been his abstract notions of morality, his practical views were darkened and debased by his long servitude to public office in a corrupt age. The stain which, as he well knew, the sentence of the parliament would affix upon his name, may have seemed a light thing to one who was aware how the same brand might have been justly imprinted on almost every eminent name in the kingdom. And again, neither Bacon nor his master, nor those others who were the royal advisers, were able to comprehend, in this instance, any more than elsewhere, the spirit which had already gone abroad. They did not anticipate the severity of the sentence pronounced by the House of Lords; still less did they anticipate (Bacon at least did not, nor perhaps did Williams) the universal indignation which was aroused by the fact that the highest judge in the realm had been displaced for bribery. The court gained its immediate purpose, in removing to a subsequent time the fatal struggle; but there soon arrived the fulfilment of Bacon's prophecy, that the successful attack on him would be but an encouragement and strengthening to those who aimed at the throne itself.

After his release from the Tower, Bacon, although strangely anxious to continue in London, was obliged to retire to his paternal seat in Gorhambury, near St. Albans. There he immediately commenced his *History of Henry the Seventh*, a work displaying but too unequivocal proofs of the

dejected lassitude which had crept upon his mind. Early next year he offered himself unsuccessfully for the Provostship of Eton College, and proceeded with other literary undertakings. These included the completion of the celebrated treatise *De Augmentis*, an improvement of the older work on the Advancement of Learning. This was the last philosophical treatise which he published; although the few remaining years of his life were incessantly devoted to study and composition, and gave birth to the *New Atlantis*, the *Sylva Sylvarum*, and other works of less consequence.

Shortly before the king's death, he remitted the whole of the sentence on Bacon, who, however, did not again sit in Parliament. His health was already broken; and in December of that year, 1625, he made his will, in which, although his affairs were really in extreme confusion, he writes as if he considered himself a wealthy man. In the spring of 1626, on his way from Gray's Inn to Gorhambury, he exposed himself to a sudden chill, by performing in a cottage an experiment which had suggested itself to him, regarding the fitness of snow or ice as a substitute for salt for preserving dead flesh. Unable to travel home, he was carried to the earl of Arundel's house at Highgate, where, after seven days' illness, he died early in the morning of Easter Sunday, the 9th of April, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. In obedience to his will he was buried in the same grave with his mother, in St. Michael's Church, near St. Albans.

It is sad beyond expression to turn to those reflections which are suggested by the life of this great man, however leniently one may be disposed to regard his weaknesses. He who founded the philosophy of modern Europe, — he who brought down philosophy from heaven to earth, disentangling it from airy abstractions, and anchoring it on practical truth, — he who aided science alike by his improvements on

its procedure, and his enlarged views of its end and aim, indicating observation of individual truths as the only sure guide to universal conclusions, and practical utility as the only quality which makes such conclusions worth the labor they cost, — he who did all this, was destined to furnish, by his own pitiable example, a pregnant illustration of the great principles which his writings taught; a slave to the world and its vanities, he was betrayed by the evil genius whom he served. Unable to subject reason, and passion, and imagination, to the stern control of the moral sense, he expiated, by a life of discomfort and dependence, ending in an old age of sorrow and disgrace, the sin of having misapprehended the mighty rule, which alone can save the empire of the mind from becoming a scene like ancient chaos.

Bacon's philosophy has been analyzed in other parts of this work,[1] and on his literary character we have left ourselves no space to enlarge. We can only remark the powerful effect which his singular versatility of talents exercised over the dissemination of his scientific views. "The reputation which Bacon had acquired from his Essays," says a late writer, "a work early translated into various foreign languages, — his splended talents as an orator, — and his prominent place in public life, — were circumstances strongly calculated to attract the curiosity of the learned world to his philosophical writings." And these writings in themselves partake admirably of the character belonging to their author's works of a different class. Philosophy has seldom made herself more attractive; never has she made herself equally so in communicating lessons of sterling value. If the works of this wonderful man were worthless as repositories of scientific thought and knowledge, they would still demand reverential study. A masterly eloquence, a union of diversified qualities of style in the highest sense of the

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica.

word, distinguished even the earlier among them, and entitled those which were produced in the writer's mature years, to rank, notwithstanding the faults they share with all prose compositions of their time, as monuments nowhere excelled in the compass of English literature.[1]

[1] Montagu's Life of Bacon, *Works*, Vol. XVI. parts 1 and 2, 1834. *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. LXV., No. 132, Art. 1. Stewart and Playfair, in the Preliminary Dissertations to the Encyc. Britan. Napier on the Scope and Influence of the Philosophical Writings of Lord Bacon ; in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, Vol. VIII. part 2, 1818.

JOSEPH BUTLER.

by Henry Rogers. —

Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham — one of the most profound and original thinkers this or any other country every produced — well deserves a place among the *dii majores* of English philosophy; with Bacon, Newton, and Locke.

The following brief sketch will comprise an outline of his life and character, some remarks on the peculiarity of his genius, and an estimate of his principal writings.

He was born at Wantage, in Berkshire, May 18, 1692. His father, Thomas Butler, had been a linen-draper in that town, but before the birth of Joseph, who was the youngest of a family of eight, had relinquished business. He continued to reside at Wantage, however, at a house called the Priory, which is still shown to the curious visitor.

Young Butler received his first instructions from the Rev. Philip Barton, a clergyman, and master of the grammar-school at Wantage. The father, who was a Presbyterian, was anxious that his son, who early gave indications of capacity, should dedicate himself to the ministry in his own communion, and sent him to a Dissenting academy at Gloucester, then kept by Mr. Samuel Jones. "Jones," says Professor Fitzgerald with equal truth and justice, "was a man of no mean ability or erudition;" and adds, with honorable

liberality, "could number among his scholars many names that might confer honor on any university in Christendom."[1] He instances among others Jeremiah Jones, the author of the excellent work on the *Canon;* Secker, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; and two of the most learned, acute, and candid apologists for Christianity England has produced — Nathaniel Lardner and Samuel Chandler.

The academy was shortly afterwards removed to Tewkesbury. While yet there, Butler first displayed his extraordinary aptitude for metaphysical speculation in the letters he sent to Clarke on two supposed flaws in the reasoning of the recently published *à priori* demonstrations; one respecting the proof of the Divine *omnipresence*, and the other respecting the proof of the *unity* of the "necessarily existent Being." It is but just to Clarke to say that his opponent subsequently surrendered both objections. Whether the capitulation be judged strictly the result of logical necessity, will depend on the estimate formed of the value of Clarke's proof of the truths in question, — truths which are happily capable of being shown to be so, independently of any such *à priori* metaphysical demonstration. In this encounter, Butler showed his modesty not less than his prowess. He was so afraid of being discovered, that he employed his friend Secker to convey his letters to the Gloucester post-office, and to bring back the answers.

About this time he began to entertain doubts of the propriety of adhering to his father's Presbyterian opinions, and consequently, of entering the ministry of that communion; doubts which at length terminated in his joining the Church of England. His father, seeing all opposition vain, at length consented to his repairing to Oxford, where he was entered

[1] *Life of Butler*, prefixed to Professor Fitzgerald's very valuable edition of the *Analogy*, Dublin, 1849. The memoir is derived chiefly from Mr. Bartlett's more copious "Life;" it is very carefully compiled, and is frequently cited in the present article.

as a commoner of Oriel College, March 17, 1714. Here he early formed an intimate friendship with Mr. Edward Talbot, the second son of Bishop of Durham, a connection to which his future advancement was in a great degree owing.

The exact period at which Butler took orders is not known, but it must have been before 1717, as by that date he was occasionally supplying Talbot's living, at Hendred, near Wantage. In 1718, at the age of twenty-six, he was nominated preacher at the Rolls, on the united recommendation of Talbot and Dr. Samuel Clarke.

At this time the country was in a ferment. What is called the "Bangorian Controversy," and which originated in a sermon of Bishop Hoadley, "On the Nature of Christ's Kingdom," (a discourse supposed to imperil "all ecclesiastical authority,") was then raging. One pamphlet which that voluminous controversy called forth has been attributed to Butler. "The external evidence, however is," as Mr. Fitzgerald judges, "but slight; and the internal for the negative at least equally so." This writer says, "On the whole, I feel unable to arrive at any positive decision on the subject." Readers curious respecting it may consult Mr. Fitzgerald's pages, where they will find a detail of the circumstances which led to the publication of the pamphlet, and the evidence for and against its being attributed to Butler.

In 1721, Bishop Talbot presented Butler with the living of Haughton, near Dorkington, and Secker, (who had also relinquished nonconformity, and after some considerable fluctuations in his religious views, had at length entered the church,) with that of Haughton-le-Spring. In 1725, the same liberal patron transferred Butler to the more lucrative benefice of Stanhope.

He retained his situation of preacher at the Rolls till the following year (1726); and before quitting it published the celebrated *Fifteen Sermons* delivered there; among the most profound and original discourses which philosophical

theologian ever gave to the world. As these could have been but a portion of those he preached at the Rolls, it has often been asked what could have become of the remainder? We agree with Mr. Fitzgerald in thinking that the substance of many was afterwards worked into the *Analogy*. That many of them were equally important with the *Fifteen* may be inferred from Butler's declaration in the preface, — that the selection of these had been determined by "circumstances in a great measure accidental." At his death, Butler desired his manuscripts to be destroyed; this he would hardly have done, had he not already rifled their chief treasures for his great work. Let us hope so at all events; for it would be provoking to think that discourses of equal value with the *Fifteen* had been wantonly committed to the flames.

After resigning his preachership at the Rolls, he retired to Stanhope, and gave himself up to study and the duties of a parish priest. All that could be gleaned of his habits and mode of life there has been preserved by the present Bishop of Exeter, his successor in the living of Stanhope eighty years after; and it is little enough. Tradition said that "Rector Butler rode a black pony, and always rode very fast; that he was loved and respected by all his parishoners; that he lived very retired, was very kind, and could not resist the importunities of common beggars, who, knowing his infirmity, pursued him so earnestly, as sometimes to drive him back into his house as his only escape." The last fact the bishop reports doubtful; but Butler's extreme benevolence is not so.

In all probability, Butler in this seclusion was meditating and digesting that great work on which his fame, and what is better than fame, his usefulness, principally rests, the *Analogy*. "In a similar retirement," says Professor Fitzgerald, "The Ecclesiastical Polity of Hooker, The Intellectual System of Cudworth, and The Divine Legation of

Warburton — records of genius 'which posterity will not willingly let die' — were ripened into maturity." Queen Caroline once asked Archbishop Blackburne whether Butler was not "dead?" "No," said he, "but he is *buried*." It was well for posterity that he was thus, for a while, entombed.

He remained in this meditative seclusion seven years. At the end of this period, his friend Secker, who thought Butler's health and spirits were failing under excess of solitude and study, succeeded in dragging him from his retreat. Lord Chancellor Talbot, at Secker's solicitation, appointed him his chaplain in 1733; and in 1736 a prebendary of Rochester. In the same year, Queen Caroline, who thought her court derived as much lustre from philosophers and divines as from statesmen and courtiers — who had been the delighted spectator of the argumentative contests of Clarke and Berkeley, Hoadley and Sherlock — appointed Butler clerk of the closet, and commanded his "attendance every evening from seven till nine."

It was in 1736 that the celebrated *Analogy* was published, and its great merits immediately attracted public attention. It was perpetually in the hands of his royal patroness, and passed through several editions before the author's death. Its greatest praise is that it has been almost universally read, and never answered. "I am not aware," says Mr. Fitzgerald, "that any of those whom it would have immediately concerned, have ever attempted a regular reply to the *Analogy;* but particular parts of it have met with answers, and the whole, as a whole, has been sometimes unfavorably criticized." Of its merits, and precise position in relation "to those whom it immediately concerns," we shall speak presently.

Some strange criticisms on its general character in Tholuck's *Vermischte Schriften*, showing a singular infelicity in

missing Butler's true "*stand-punkt*," as Tholuck's own countrymen would say, and rather unreasonably complaining of obscurity, considering the quality of German theologico-philosophical style in general, are well disposed of by Professor Fitzgerald, (pp. 47–50).

About this time Butler had some correspondence with Lord Kaimes, on the *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*. Kaimes requested a personal interview, which Butler declined in a manner very characteristic of his modesty and caution. It was, "on the score of his natural diffidence and reserve, his being unaccustomed to oral controversy, and his fear that the cause of truth might thence suffer from the unskilfulness of its advocate."

Hume was a kinsman of Lord Kaimes, and when preparing his treatise of *Human Nature* for the press, was recommended by Lord Kaimes to get Butler's judgment on it. "Your thoughts and mine," says Hume, "agree with respect to Dr. Butler, and I should be glad to be introduced to him." The interview, however, never took place, nor was Butler's judgment obtained. One cannot help speculating on the possible consequences. Would it have made any difference?

In the year 1737, Queen Caroline died, but on her deathbed recommended her favorite divine to her husband's care. In 1738, Butler was accordingly made Bishop of Bristol, in place of Dr. Gooch, who was translated to Norwich. This seems to have been a politic stroke of Walpole, "who probably thought" says Fitzgerald, "that the ascetic rector of Stanhope was too unworldly a person to care for the poverty of his preferment, or perceive the slight which it implied." In the reply, however, in which Butler expresses his sense of the honor conferred, he shows that he understood the position of matters very clearly. The hint he gave seems to have had its effect, for in 1740 the King nominated him to the vacant Deanery of St. Pauls, where-

upon he resigned Stanhope, which he had hitherto held *in commendam*. The revenues of Bristol, the poorest see, did not exceed £400.

A curious anecdote of Butler has been preserved by his domestic chaplain, Dr. Tucker, afterwards Dean of Gloucester. He says: "His custom was, when at Bristol, to walk for hours in his garden in the darkest night which the time of year could afford, and I had frequently the honor to attend him. After walking some time, he would stop suddenly and ask the question, 'what security is there against the insanity of individuals? The physicians know of none, and as to divines, we have no data, either from Scripture or from reason, to go upon in relation to this affair.' 'True, my Lord, no man has a lease of his understanding any more than of his life; they are both in the hands of the Sovereign Disposer of all things.' He would then take another turn, and again stop short: 'Why might not whole communities and public bodies be seized with fits of insanity, as well as individuals?' 'My Lord, I have never considered the case, and can give no opinion concerning it.' 'Nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity, equally at least with private persons, can account for the major part of those transactions of which we read in history.' I thought little of that odd conceit of the bishop at that juncture; but I own I could not avoid thinking of it a great deal since, and applying it to many cases."

In 1747, on the death of Archbishop Potter, it is said that the primacy was offered to Butler, who declined it, with the remark that "it was too late for him to try to support a falling church." If he really said so, it must have been in a moment of despondency, to which his constitutional melancholy often disposed him. No such feeling, at all events, prevented his accepting the bishopric of Durham in 1750, on the death of Dr. Edward Chandler. About the time of his promotion to this dignity, he was engaged in a design for

consolidating and extending the Church of England in the American colonies. With this object he drew up a plan marked by his characteristic moderation and liberality; the project, however, came to nothing.

Soon after his translation to the see of Durham, Butler delivered and published his charge on the Use and Importance of External Religion, which gave rise, in conjunction with his erection of a "white marble cross" over the communion table in his chapel at Bristol, and one or two other slight circumstances, to the ridiculous and malignant charge of popery; — a charge, as Mr. Fitzgerald observes, "destitute of a shadow of positive evidence, and contradicted by the whole tenor of Butler's character, life, and writings."

The revenues from his see were lavishly expended in the support of public and private charities,[1] while his own mode of life was most simple and unostentatious. Of the frugality of his table, the following anecdote is proof: — "A friend of mine, since deceased, told me," says the Rev. John Newton, "that when he was a young man, he once dined with the late Dr. Butler, at that time Bishop of Durham; and, though the guest was a man of fortune, and the interview by appointment, the provision was no more than a joint of meat and a pudding. The bishop apologized for his plain fare, by saying, that it was his way of living; 'that he had long been disgusted with the fashionable expense of time and

[1] Butler must have been of a naturally munificent as well as benevolent disposition. He was extremely fond, it appears, of *planning* and *building;* a passion not always very prudently indulged, or without danger, in early days, of involving him in difficulties; from which, indeed, on one occasion Secker's intervention saved him. He spent large sums in improving his various residences. It was probably in the indulgence of the love of ornamentation to which this passion led, that the "marble cross" and other imprudent symbols which were so ridiculously adduced to support the charge of popery originated.

money in entertainments, and was determined that it should receive no countenance from his example.'" No prelate ever owed less to politics for his elevation, or took less part in them. If he was not "wafted to his see of Durham," as Horace Walpole ludicrously said, "on a cloud of metaphysics," he certainly was not carried there by political intrigue or party manœuvres. He was never known to speak in the House of Peers, though constant in his attendance there.

He had not long enjoyed his new dignity before symptoms of decay disclosed themselves. He repaired to Bath in 1752, in hope of recovering his health, where he died, June 16, in the sixtieth year of his age.

His face was thin, and pale, but singularly expressive of placidity and benevolence. "His white hair," says Hutchinson,[1] "hung gracefully on his shoulders, and his whole figure was patriarchal." He was buried in the cathedral of Bristol, where two monuments have been erected to his memory. They record in suitable inscriptions (one in Latin by his chaplain, Dr. Foster, and the other in English by the late Dr. Southey) his virtues and genius. Though epitaphs, they speak no more than simple truth.

A singular anecdote is recorded of his last moments. As Mr. Fitzgerald observes, "it wants direct testimony," but is in itself neither uninstructive nor incredible, for a dying hour has often given strange vividness and intensity to truths neither previously unknown nor uninfluential. It is generally given thus: — "When Bishop Butler lay on his death-bed, he called for his chaplain, and said, 'though I have endeavored to avoid sin, and to please God, to the utmost of my power; yet, from the consciousness of perpetual infirmities, I am still afraid to die.' 'My Lord,' said the chaplain, 'you have forgotten that Jesus Christ is a

[1] *History of Durham*, vol. I. p. 578; cited in Fitzgerald's "Life."

Saviour.' 'True,' was the answer, 'but how shall I know that he is a Saviour for me?' 'My Lord, it is written, him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out.' 'True,' said the bishop, 'and I am surprised, that though I have read that Scripture a thousand times over, I never felt its virtue till this moment; and now I die happy.'"

The genius of Butler was almost equally distinguished by subtilty and comprehensiveness, though the latter quality was perhaps the most characteristic. In his *juvenile* correspondence with Clarke — already referred to — he displays an acuteness which, as Sir James Mackintosh observes, "neither himself nor any other ever surpassed;" an analytic skill, which, in earlier ages, might easily have gained him a rank with the most renowned of the schoolmen. But in his mature works, though they are everywhere characterized by subtle thought, he manifests in combination with it qualities yet more valuable; — patient comprehensiveness in the survey of complex evidence, a profound judgment and a most judicial calmness in computing its several elements, and a singular constructive skill in combining the materials of argument into a consistent logical fabric. This "architectural power" of mind may be wholly or nearly wanting, where the mere analytic faculty may exist in much vigor. The latter may even be possessed in vicious excess, resulting in little more than the disintegration of the subjects presented to its ingenuity. Synthetically to reconstruct the complex unity, when the task of analysis is completed, to assign the reciprocal relations and law of subordination of its various parts, requires something more. Many can take a watch to pieces, who would be sorely puzzled to put it together again.

Butler possessed these powers of analysis and synthesis in remarkable equipoise. What is more, he could not only recombine, and present in symmetrical harmony, the elements of a complex unity when capable of being subjected

to an exact previous analysis, — as in his remarkable sketch of the Moral Constitution of Man, — but he had a wonderfully keen eye for detecting remote analogies and subtle relations where the elements are presented intermingled or in isolation, and insusceptible of being presented as a single object of contemplation previous to the attempt to combine them. This is the case with the celebrated *Analogy*. In the *Sermons on Human Nature*, he comprehensively surveys that nature as a *system* or *constitution;* and after a careful analysis of its principles, affections, and passions, views these elements in combination, endeavors to reduce each of these to its place, assigns to them their relative importance, and deduces from the whole the law of subordination, — which he finds in the Moral Supremacy of Conscience, as a keystone to the arch — the ruling principle of the "Constitution." In the *Analogy*, he gathers up and combines from a wide survey of scattered and disjointed facts, those resemblances and relations on which the argument is founded, and works them into one of the most original and symmetrical logical creations to which human genius ever gave birth. The latter task was by far the more gigantic of the two. To recur to our previous illustration, Butler is here like one who puts a watch together without having been permitted to take it to pieces — from the mere presentation of its disjointed fragments. In the former case he resembled the physiologist who has an entire animal to study and dissect; in the latter he resembled Cuvier, constructing out of *disjecta membra* — a bone scattered here and there — an organized unity which man had never seen except in isolated fragments.

All Butler's productions — even his briefest — display much of this "architectonic" quality of mind; in all he not only evinces a keen analytic power in discerning the "differences," (one phase of the philosophic genius, according to Bacon, and hardly the brightest,) but a still higher power

of detecting the "analogies" and "resemblances of things," and thus of showing their relation and subordination. These peculiarities make his writings difficult; but it makes them profound, and it gives them singular completeness.

It is not difficult to assign the precise sphere in which Butler, with eminent gifts for abstract science in general, felt most at home. Facts show us, not only that there are peculiarities of mental structure which prompt men to the pursuit of some of the great objects of thought and speculation rather than others — peculiarities which circumstances may determine and education modify, but which neither circumstances nor education can do *more* than determine or modify; but that even in relation to the very same subject of speculation, there are minute and specific varieties of mind, which prompt men to addict themselves rather to this part of it than to that. This was the case with Butler. Eminently fitted for the prosecution of metaphysical science in general, it is always the *philosophy of the moral nature of man* to which he most naturally attaches himself, and on which he best loves to expatiate. Neither Bacon nor Pascal ever revolved more deeply the phenomena of our moral nature, or contemplated its inconsistencies — its intricacies — its paradoxes — with a keener glance or more comprehensive survey; or drew from such survey reflections more original or instructive. As in reading Locke the young metaphysician is perpetually startled by the palpable apparition, in distinct sharply-defined outline, of facts of consciousness which he recognizes as having been partially and dimly present to his mind before — though too fugitive to fix, too vague to receive a name; so in reading Butler, he is continually surprised by the statement of moral facts and laws, which he then first adequately recognizes as true, and sees in distinct vision face to face. It is not without reason that Sir James Mackintosh says of the sermons preached at the Rolls, "that in them Butler has taught truths more

capable of being exactly distinguished from the doctrines of his predecessors, more satisfactorily established by him, more comprehensively applied to particulars, more rationally connected with each other, and therefore more worthy of the name of *discovery*, than any with which we are acquainted."

His special predilections for the sphere of speculation we have mentioned are strikingly indicated in his choice of the *ground* from which he proposes to survey the questions of morals. "There are two ways," says he in the preface to his three celebrated sermons on Human Nature, "in which the subject of morals may be treated. One begins inquiring into the abstract relations of things; the other, from a matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is, its several parts, their economy or constitution; from whence it proceeds to determine what course of life it is, which is correspondent to this whole nature." As might be expected, from the tendencies of his mind, he selects the *latter* course.

The powers of *observation* in Butler must have been, in spite of his studious life and his remarkable habits of abstraction, not much inferior to his keen faculty of introspection, though this last was undoubtedly the main instrument by which he traced so profoundly the mysteries of our nature. There have doubtless been other men, far less profound, who have had a more quick and more vivid perception of the peculiarities of character which discriminate individuals, or small classes of men (evincing, after all, however, not so much a knowledge of *man* as a knowledge of *men*); still, the masterly manner in which Butler often sketches even these, shows that he must have been a very sagacious observer of those phenomena of human nature which presented themselves from *without*, as well as of those which revealed themselves from *within*. In general, however, it is the characteristics of *man*, the generic phenomena of our nature, in all their complexity and subtilty,

that he best loves to investigate and exhibit. The spirit of his profound philosophy is meantime worthy both of the Christian character and the ample intellect of him who excogitated it. It is the very reverse of that of the philosophical satirist or caricaturist; however severely just the foibles, the inconsistencies, the corruptions of our nature, it is a philosophy everywhere compassionate, magnanimous, and philanthropic. Its tone, indeed, like that of the philosophy of Pascal (though not shaded with the same deep melancholy), is entirely modulated by a profound conviction of the frailty and ignorance of man, of the little we know compared with what is to be known, and of the duty of humility, modesty, and caution in relation to all those great problems of the universe, which tempt and exercise man's ambitious speculations. His constant feeling, amidst the beautiful and original reasonings of the *Analogy*, is identical with that of Newton, when, reverting at the close of life to his sublime discoveries, he declared that he seemed only like a child who had been amusing himself with picking up a few shells on the margin of the ocean of universal truth, while the infinite still lay unexplored before him. In a word, it is the feeling, not only of Pascal and of Newton, but of all the profoundest speculators of our race, whose grandest lesson from all they learned, was the vanishing ratio of man's knowledge to man's ignorance. Hence the immense value (if only as a discipline) of a careful study of Butler's writings, to every youthful mind. They cannot but powerfully tend to check presumption, and teach modesty and self-distrust.

The feebleness of Butler's imagination was singularly contrasted with the *inventive* and *constructive* qualities of his intellect, and the facility with which he detected and employed "analogies" in the way of argument. He is, indeed, almost unique in this respect. Other philosophic minds (Bacon and Burke are illustrious examples), which

have possessed similar aptitudes for "analogical" reasoning, have usually had quite sufficient of the kindred activity of imagination to employ "analogies" for the purpose of poetical illustration. If Butler possessed this faculty by nature in any tolerable measure, it must (as has been the case with some other great thinkers) have been repressed and absorbed by his habits of abstraction. His defect in this respect is, in some respects, to be regretted, since unquestionably the illustrations which imagination would have supplied to argument, and the graces it would have imparted to style, would have made his writings both more intelligible and more attractive. It is said that once, and once only, he "courted the muses," having indited a solitary "acrostic to a fair cousin" who for the first, and as it seems, the only time, inspired him with the tender passion. But, as one of his biographers says, we have probably no great reason to lament the loss of this fragment of his poetry.

Butler's composition is almost as destitute of the vivacity of wit as of the graces of imagination. Yet is he by no means without that dry sort of humor, which often accompanies very vigorous logic, and, indeed, is in some sense inseparable from it; for the neat detection of a sophism, or the sudden and unexpected explosion of a fallacy, produces much the same effect as wit on those who are capable of enjoying close and cogent reasoning. There is also a kind of simple, grave, satirical pleasantry, with which he sometimes states and refutes an objection, by no means without its piquancy.

As to the complaint of obscurity, which has been so often charged on Butler's style, it is difficult to see its justice in the sense in which it has been usually preferred. He is a *difficult* author, no doubt, but he is so from the close packing of his thoughts, and their immense generality and comprehensiveness; as also from what may be called the *breadth* of his march, and from occasional lateral excursions for the

purpose of disposing of some objection which he does not formally mention, but which might harass his flank; it certainly is not from indeterminate language or (ordinarily) involved construction. All that is really required in the reader, *capable* of understanding him at all, is to do just what he does with lyrical poetry (if we may employ an odd, and yet in this one point, not inapt comparison); he must read sufficiently often to make all the transitions of thought familiar, he must let the mind dwell with patience on each argument till its entire scope and bearing are properly appreciated. Nothing certainly is wanting in the method or arrangement of the thoughts; and the diction seems to us selected with the utmost care and precision. Indeed, as Professor Fitzgerald justly observes, a collation of the first with the subsequent editions of the *Analogy* (the variations are given in Mr. Fitzgerald's edition) will show, by the nature of the alterations, what pains Butler bestowed on a point on which he is erroneously supposed to have been negligent. In subjects so abstruse, and involving so much generality of expression, the utmost difficulty must always be experienced in selecting language which conveys *neither more nor less* than what is intended; and this point Butler must have labored immensely; it may be added, successfully, since he has at least produced works which have seldom given rise to disputes as to his meaning. Though he may be difficult to be understood, few people complain of his being liable to be *mis*understood. In short, it may be doubted whether any man of so comprehensive a mind, and dealing with such abstract subjects, ever condensed the results of twenty years meditations into so small a compass, with so little obscurity. No doubt greater amplification would have made him more pleasing, but it may be questioned whether the perusal of his writings would have been so useful a discipline; and whether the truths he has delivered would have fixed themselves so indelibly as they now

generally do in the minds of all who diligently study him. It is the result of the very activity of mind his writings stimulate and demand. But, at any rate, if precision in the use of language, and method and consecutiveness in the thoughts, are sufficient to rebut the charge of obscurity, Butler is not chargeable with the fault in the ordinary sense. We must never forget what Whately in his *Rhetoric* has so well illustrated — that perspicuity is a "relative quality." To the intelligent, or those who are willing to take sufficient pains to understand, Butler will not seem chargeable with obscurity. The diction is plain, downright Saxon-English, and the style, however homely, has, as the writer just mentioned observes, the great charm of transparent simplicity of purpose and unaffected earnestness.

The immortal *Analogy* has probably done more to silence the objections of infidelity than any other ever written from the earliest "apologies" downwards. It not only most critically met the spirit of unbelief in the author's own day, but is equally adapted to meet that which *chiefly* prevails in all time. In every age some of the principal, perhaps *the* principal, objections to the Christian Revelation, have been those which men's *preconceptions* of the Divine character and administration — of what God *must* be, and of what God *must* do — have suggested against certain facts in the sacred history, or certain doctrines it reveals. To show the objector then (supposing him to be a theist, as nine tenths of all such objectors have been), that the very same or similar difficulties are found in the structure of the universe and the divine administration of it, is to wrest every *such* weapon completely from his hands, if he be a fair reasoner and remains a theist at all. He is bound by strict logical obligation either to show that the parallel difficulties do not exist, or to show how he can solve them, while he *cannot* solve those of the Bible. In default of

doing either of these things, he ought either to renounce all *such* objections to Christianity, or abandon theism altogether. It is true, therefore, that though Butler leaves the alternative of atheism open, he hardly leaves any other alternative to nine tenths of the theists who have objected to Christianity.

It has been sometimes said by way of reproach, that Butler *does* leave that door open; that his work does not confute the atheist. The answer is, that it is not its object to confute atheism; but it is equally true, that it does not diminish by one grain any of the arguments against it. It leaves the evidence for theism — every particle of it — just where it was. Butler merely avails himself of facts which exist, undeniably exist (whether men be atheists or theists), to neutralize a certain class of objections against Christianity. And as the exhibition of such facts as form the pivot on which Butler's argument turns, does not impugn the truth of theism, but leaves its conclusions, and the immense preponderance and convergence of evidence which establish them just as they were, so it is equally true that Butler has sufficiently guarded his argument from any perversion; for example, in Part I. chap. VI. and Part II. chap. VIII. He has also with his accustomed acuteness and judgment shown that, even on the principles of atheism itself, its confident assumption that, *if* its principles be granted, a future life — future happiness — future misery — is a dream — cannot be depended on; for since men have existed, they may again; and if in a bad condition now in a worse hereafter. It is not, on such an hypothesis, a whit more unaccountable that man's life should be renewed or preserved, or perpetuated forever, than that it should have been originated at all. On this point, he truly says, "That we are to live hereafter is just as reconcilable with the scheme of atheism, and as well to be accounted for by it, as

that we are now alive, is; and therefore nothing can be more absurd than to argue from that scheme, that there can be no future state."

It has been also alleged that the analogy only "*shifts* the difficulty from revealed to natural religion," and that "atheists might make use of the arguments and have done so." The answer is, not only (as just said) that the arguments of Butler leave every particle of the evidence for theism just where it was, and that he has sufficiently guarded against all abuse of them; but that the *facts*, of which it is so foolishly said that the atheist *might* make ill use, had always been the very arguments which he *had* used, and of which Butler only made a new and beneficial application. The objections with which he perplexes and baffles the deist, *he* did not give to the atheist's armory; he took them from thence, merely to make an unexpected and more legitimate use of them. The atheist had never neglected such weapons, nor was likely to do so, previous to Butler's adroit application of them. The charge is ridiculous; as well might a man, who had wrested a stiletto from an assassin to defend himself, be accused of having put the weapon into the assassin's hands! It was there before; he merely wrested it thence. It is just so with Butler.

Further; we cannot but think that the conclusiveness of Butler's work as against its true object *The Deist*, has often been underrated, by many even of its genuine admirers. Thus Dr. Chalmers, for instance, who gives such glowing proofs of his admiration of the work, and expatiates in a congenial spirit on its merits, affirms that "those overrate the power of analogy who look to it for any very distinct or positive contribution to the Christian argument. To repel objections, in fact, is the great service which analogy has rendered to the cause of Revelation, and it is the *only service* which we seek for at its hands."[1] This, abstractedly, is true;

[1] *Prelections on Butler*, etc. p. 7.

but, *in fact*, considering the *position* of the bulk of the objectors, that they have been invincibly persuaded of the truth of theism, and that their objections to Christianity have been exclusively or chiefly of the kind dealt with in the *Analogy*, the work is much more than an *argumentum ad hominem;* it is not simply of negative value. To such *objectors* it logically establishes the truth of Christianity, or it forces them to recede from theism, which the bulk will not do. If a man says, "I am invincibly persuaded of the truth of proposition A, but I cannot receive proposition B, because objections α, β, γ are opposed to it; if these were removed, my objections would cease;" then, if you can show that α, β, γ equally apply to the proposition A, his reception of which, he says, is based on invincible evidence, you do really compel such a man to believe that not only B *may* be true, but that it *is* true, unless he be willing (which few in the parallel case are) to abandon proposition A as well as B. This is precisely the condition in which the majority of deists have ever been, if we may judge from their writings. It is usually the *à priori* assumption, that certain facts in the history of the Bible, or some portions of its doctrine, are unworthy of the Deity, and incompatible with his character or administration, that has chiefly excited the incredulity of the deist; far more than any dissatisfaction with the positive evidence which substantiates the Divine origin of Christianity. Neutralize these objections by showing that they are *equally* applicable to what he declares he cannot relinquish — the doctrines of theism; and you show him, if he has a particle of logical sagacity, not only that Christianity may be true, but that it is so; and his only escape is by relapsing into atheism, or resting his opposition on other objections of a very feeble character in comparison, and which, probably, few would have ever been contented with alone; for *apart* from those objections which Butler repels, the historical evidence for Christianity — the evidence on be-

half of the integrity of its records, and the honesty and sincerity of its founders, showing that they *could* not have constructed such a system if they *would*, and *would* not, supposing them impostors, if they *could* — is stronger than that for any fact in history.

In consequence of this position of the argument, Butler's book, to large classes of objectors, though practically an *argumentum ad hominem*, not only proves Christianity *may* be true, but in all logical fairness proves it *is* so. This he himself, with his usual judgment, points out. He says: "And objections, which are equally applicable to both natural and revealed religion, are, properly speaking, answered by its being shown that they are so, *provided the former be admitted to be true.*"

The praise which Mackintosh bestowed on this great work, is alike worthy of it and himself. "Butler's great work, though only a commentary on the singularly original and pregnant passage of Origen, which is so honestly prefixed to it as a motto, is, notwithstanding, the most original and profound work extant in any language, on the *Philosophy of Religion.*" [1] The favorite topics of the *Sermons* are, of course, largely insisted on in the *Analogy;* such as the "ignorance of man;" the restrictions which the limitations of his nature and his position in the universe should impose on his speculations; his subjection to "probability as the guide of life;" the folly and presumption of pronouncing, *à priori*, on the character and conduct of the Divine Ruler from our contracted point of view, and our glimpses of but a very small segment of his universal plan. These topics Butler enforces with a power not less admirable than

[1] A far different and utterly inconsistent judgment in all respects is reported, in his "Life," to have fallen from him. But as Professor Fitzgerald shows, it is so strangely, and, indeed, amusingly contrary to the above, that it must have been founded on some mistake of something that must have been said in conversation.

the sagacity with which he traces the analogies between the "Constitution and Course of Nature," and the disclosures of "Divine Revelation." These last, of course, form the staple of the argument; but to enforce the proper deductions from them, the above favorite topics are absolutely essential.

It has been sometimes, though erroneously, surmised, that Butler was considerably indebted to preceding writers. That in the progress of the long deistical controversy many theologians should have caught glimpses of the same line of argument, is not wonderful. The constant iteration by the English deists of that same class of difficulties to which the *Analogy* replies, could not fail to lead to a partial perception of the powerful instrument it was reserved for Butler effectually to wield. It has been here as with almost every other great intellectual achievement of man; many minds have been simultaneously engaged by the natural progress of events *about* the same subject of thought; there have been "coming shadows" and "vague anticipations," perhaps even simultaneous inventions or discoveries; and then ensues much debate as to the *true* claimants. Thus it was in relation to the calculus, the analysis of water, the invention of the steam-engine, and the discovery of Neptune.

In the present case, however, there can be no doubt that the merit of the systematic construction of the entire argument rests with Butler. Nor would it have much detracted from his merit, even if he had derived far larger fragments of the fabric from his contemporaries than we have any reason to believe he did. They would have been but single stones; the architectural genius which brought them from their distant quarries and polished them, and wrought them into a massive evidence, was his alone.

Professor Fitzgerald has truly remarked, that the work of Dr. James Foster against Tindal (an author Butler evidently has constantly in his eye), presents some curious parallelisms with certain passages of the *Analogy;* we

have ourselves noted in Conybeare's reply to the same infidel writer (published six years before the *Analogy*), other parallelisms not less striking. But it seems quite improbable that Butler should have derived aid from any such sources, since his work was being excogitated for many years before it was published; nay, as we have seen, it may be conjectured that he largely transfused into it portions of the sermons delivered so long before at the Rolls, and of which a far greater number must have been preached than the fifteen he published; so that, perhaps, it is more near the truth to say, that contemporary writers had been indebted to him than he to them.

The "pregnant sentence" from Origen, however, is not the only thing which may have suggested to Butler his great work. Berkeley, in a long passage of the "Minute Philosopher," cited by Mr. Fitzgerald, clearly lays down the *principle* on which such a work as the *Analogy* might be constructed.

The spirit of the *Analogy* is admirable. Though eminently controversial in its origin and purpose; and though the author must constantly have had the deistical writers of the day in his eye, his work is calm and dignified, and divested of every trace of the controversial spirit. He does not even mention the names of the men whose opinions he is refuting; and if their systems had been merely some new minerals, or ærolites dropped upon the world from some unknown sphere, he could not have analyzed them with less of passion.

Of Butler's ethical philosophy, as expounded especially in the *Sermons on Human Nature* Sir James [illegible] remarks prefixed to this Encyclopædia,[1] sup[illegible] notice in the present brief article. But it may be [illegible] in general of the sermons preached at the Rolls, that though

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica.

not so much read (if we except, perhaps, the three just mentioned) as the *Analogy*, they are to the full as worthy of being read; they deserve all that is so strikingly said of them in the Preliminary Dissertation. Some of them fill one with wonder at the sagacity with which the moral paradoxes in human nature are investigated and reconciled. Take, for example, the sermon on Balaam. The first feeling in many a mind on reading the history in the Old Testament is, that man *could* not so act in the given circumstances. We doubt if ever any man deeply pondered the sermon of Butler, in which he dwells on the equally unaccountable phenomena of human conduct, less observed, indeed, only because more observable — and questioned any longer man's powers of self-deception, even to such feats of folly and wickedness as are recorded of the prophet.

The editions of Butler's writings, separately or altogether, have been numerous, and it is impossible within the limits of this article to specify them; still less to do justice to the *literature* which they have produced. His commentators have been many and most illustrious; seldom has a man who wrote so little, engaged so many great minds to do him homage, by becoming his exponents and annotators. It may be permitted, however, to mention with deserved honor the Remarks of Sir James Mackintosh prefixed to this Encyclopædia; the "Prelections" of Dr. Chalmers on the *Analogy*, the valuable "Essay" of Dr. Hampden on the "Philosophical Evidence of Christianity;" some beautiful applications of Butler's principle in Whately's "Essays on the Peculiarities of Christianity;" and the admirable edition of the *Analogy* by Professor Fitzgerald, which is [illegible] many very acute and judicious notes, and by a [illegible] valuable index.

JOHN HOWARD.

JOHN HOWARD, the philanthropist, belongs to the rare order of men who have won from the world special titles of distinction. Many persons have earned the title of Great, from Macedonia's madman to the Swede; but mankind has endowed only one man with the appellative Just. In Howard's case the complimentary addition of the Philanthropist is not a mere figure of speech.

Howard was born at Enfield, (*not* at Hackney, as the monument in St. Paul's asserts,) where his father, a retired London merchant, had a country house. He was born on the 2d of September, 1726. His father was wealthy, and was elected to serve as sheriff; but the Test Act being then in force, he paid the fine usually paid by Dissenters to escape that honor, a policy which his son afterwards, happily for the world, refused to follow. Howard was a sickly child, and country air was found necessary to his health. He was removed to Cardington, a village in Bedfordshire, near to Woburn, where his father had a small estate. The facts of his early life are few, and are soon told. He grew in years and strength, a quiet, simple, original boy; not bright, not vigorous, not ambitious. From his two schoolmasters, the Rev. John Horseley, (author of a *Latin Grammar* and translator of a version of the *New Testament*,) and

Mr. John Eames, F. R. S., he learned but little Latin and less Greek; yet even in his early years he acquired some knowledge of living languages, and a fair acquaintance with natural science, geography, and medicine. At sixteen, he was apprenticed to a grocer in the city, paying seven hundred pounds as a premium. But his father now died, and he was his own master. He therefore bought off his apprenticeship, travelled into France and Italy, bought pictures, visited famous churches and cities, and after an absence almost of two years' duration, during which he perfected himself in French, so as to speak the language like a native, he returned to England. Here he lodged at Stoke-Newington, studied medicine and meteorology, put himself on a diet of bread and tea, fell seriously ill, and married his nurse, an old woman, who was also a confirmed invalid. He was twenty-five, she was about fifty-three. He married her because he believed that she had saved his life, and that no other return for her motherly kindness was sufficient.

She lived three years as a wife, when her malady wore her out, and she was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, Whitechapel. A plain tombstone marks the spot. At her death Howard broke up his house. The earthquake at Lisbon had just occurred; that earthquake, the effect of which on the minds of men Goethe has so powerfully described in his *Wahrheit und Dichtung*. Philanthropic impulse was stirred in Howard; he believed that he could help to alleviate the calamity, and he took a berth in the "Hanover." But the Seven Years' War was then raging. French, Austrian, and Prussian armies were fighting in various parts of Europe, and English and French cruisers swept the seas in every direction. Providence threw the "Hanover" in the way of a French privateer; she and her passengers were carried into Brest. The crew and passengers were treated with extreme cruelty, were hurried from place to place, starved, and cast into loathsome dungeons.

Howard's heart almost broke with indignation at the treatment suffered by his gallant and unhappy countrymen. "I had evidence," he says, "of their being treated with such barbarity that many hundreds had perished, and that thirty-six were buried in a hole in Dinan in one day." When he obtained his release on parol, he went to the government, described in powerful language the scenes he had witnessed, and compelled the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen to take measures for securing an exchange of prisoners. A naval officer replaced himself; and in a few days he had the satisfaction to hear of the release of his fellow-captives in Brittany.

Howard still retreated from public life. His scientific studies were continued, and on May 13, 1756, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, to the *Transactions* of which he contributed three papers. Two years later he married again. "My second wife was Henrietta Leeds, whom a good God gave me the second of May." Such are his own words. They lived together in the seclusion of a country house for nine years, when their only child, a son, was born, and the mother died in the exhaustion of nature. Howard's public career began after her death. During her life his energies were chiefly confined to the village of Cardington, in which he commenced a reform, then new and startling, but which has, since his age, and greatly through his example, received a happy development. He was the first builder of model cottages.

When Howard went to reside at Cardington, that village was about as filthy, wretched, and unwholesome as any spot in England. The neighboring gentry followed the hounds, and exacted their rents. The poor were idle, dirty, immoral; the men passed their days in the ale-house, and their nights in the preserves; the women were ill-used, the children ignorant and neglected. Howard's property was small in the district compared with that of his neighbors,

and before he began his plan, he wisely added to his estate by two purchases, at once to increase his influence in the place, and to obtain a larger field for operations. He then built a school for boys and a school for girls, procured good teachers, and invited the villagers (not merely his own tenants) to send their children, his only conditions being regularity, cleanliness, and attendance at some place of worship on the Sunday. At the same time he pulled down the wretched hovels in which his poorer tenants lived — hovels of a single room in which father, mother, and grown up children had to eat and sleep — and erected larger and more commodious cottages to replace them. With the sure instinct of a reformer, he saw that such hovels were not, never could be happy homes, — residences in which men with any sense of shame, any feeling of self-respect, could live contentedly while the ale-house offered its cheerful lights and jovial company as a change. He therefore undertook to remove them. His model cottages were occupied as fast as they were raised. They cost more money, yet he did not raise the rent; for, in spite of his commercial training, he had scruples about putting out money at interest, and looked upon wealth as a sacred and moral deposit placed in his hands for the benefit of mankind, not for his own private use and pleasure. In a few years some of his rich friends and neighbors, especially Samuel Whitbread, (the famous brewer, and father of the celebrated politician, Whitbread,) seeing the success of his scheme, lent a hand in the good work. The schools flourished; the children grew clean and rosy; poaching became rare; the chapels and churches were filled; little patches of garden rose at the cottage doors; ale-houses lost some of their strong attractions; and Cardington began to strike the stranger's eye as a pretty, clean, and prosperous village.

After his second wife's death Howard busied himself with his books, his schools, and cottages. He travelled into Hol-

land. He went to France, to Switzerland, to Italy; but he found no rest for the sole of his foot. He returned as far as Holland (his favorite country next to his own), and went back thence to Rome and Naples. He admired the Apollo and the Gladiator, and he felt the usual raptures before the paintings of Titian, Guido, and Raphael. He saw the Pope and the Pretender; the first "a worthy good man;" the second "a mere sot, very stupid, dull, and bending double." He went up the mountain to Vesuvius, and down the lagune to Venice. He came home through Munich, Augsburg, and the Rhine — came home to find himself unexpectedly named Sheriff of Bedford, and to begin his public career. This was in 1773. He accepted the office of Sheriff, though a Dissenter, resolved not to take the usual sacraments, but to brave a bad law, and, if prosecuted, defend himself in the courts. No one prosecuted him. When the assizes opened he sat in the court, and when the trials of the day were over he descended into the jail to see in what state the prisoners were. It was the prison into which Bunyan had been thrown, and in which he wrote his immortal *Pilgrim's Progress*. Howard found it, like all the jails of the time, dirty and close, without decent accommodation for the women, and with scarcely any practical separation of the two sexes. The air was bad, the food worse, the water intolerable. The fees were high, and rigorously exacted; the jailer and his subordinates living on the wretched wages they could wring from the misery of the poor prisoners. What most of all astonished his humane heart, and violated his sense of right, was the fact that some of the accused who had been freed by judge and jury, and who had left the court without a stain, were kept in the horrid jail (for longer or shorter periods, according to their circumstances, but in some cases for *years*) until they paid the fees of jail delivery. Howard instantly brought this monstrous form of wrong before the county magistrates, and proposed that an

order should be issued for the discharge of these innocent sufferers, and that a rule should be adopted in future for the instant liberation in open court of all such persons as were found not guilty. The magistrates were startled at such bold reforms; the jailer protested against the loss of his fees, which were his income, his means of life, as he had no salary from the county. The clerk of assize put in a similar protest. Howard proposed to redeem these fees by paying regular salaries to these servants of the public; but the magistrates knew of no precedent for such a course, and without a precedent they could not act. Howard undertook to find it, if such existed in any neighboring county. He went to Cambridge, to Huntingdon, to Northampton, to Leicester, and to Nottingham, and this journey gradually extended to every town in England where was then a prison. The object of his search eluded inquiry. He could find no precedent for charging the county with the wages of its servants; but he discovered so many abuses in the management of prisons which imagination had never conceived, and so many sufferings of which the general public knew nothing, and of which the law took no account, that he determined to devote to the examination of these wrongs, and the reform of these abuses, whatever time and money might be needful. The task cost him a fortune, and the remaining years of his life.

The inquiry now attracted public attention. At the close of his first rapid survey of our prisons, the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee, and heard his report at the bar of the House. Popham, member for Taunton, had already forced the unwilling legislature to discuss the propriety of paying fixed salaries out of the county rates; but the House had dropped the bill. Howard's revelations completed Popham's arguments. Nearly fifty years before that time the House had appointed a committee to inquire into the state of Newgate, the Marshalsea, and other London jails, when abuses came to light which caused the House to

order the arrest of several governors of jails, who were tried for high misdemeanors.[1]

But the public, as well as the parliament, shrank from the investigation of scenes so horrid, so that after an explosion of virtue on the part of Mr. Oglethorpe, magnificently rewarded by a couplet in Pope, the subject was allowed to die out of recollection until the researches of Howard and the zeal of Popham raised it in a more favorable age. When the House resumed, Sir Thomas Clavering, at the instance of the committee, moved "that John Howard, Esq., be called to the bar, and that Mr. Speaker do acquaint him that the House are very sensible of the humanity and zeal which have led him to visit the several gaols of this kingdom, and to communicate to the House the interesting observations which he has made upon that subject." This vote put the seal of public sanction on his inquiries, so that his subsequent investigations had a sort of semi-official character, of vast use to him in dealing with morose jailers and impracticable magistrates of the very old school.

From St. Stephen's Howard went to the Marshalsea; afterwards to each of the London prisons, which he minutely examined. From London he passed to the north of England, whence he was recalled by the passing of two new bills, based on Popham's abandoned measure of the previous session and on his own communications to the House. The first bill provided for the liberation, free of all charges, of every prisoner against whom the grand-jury failed to find a true bill, giving the jailer a sum from the county rate in lieu of the abolished fees. The second bill required justices of the peace to see that the walls and ceilings of all prisons within their jurisdiction were scraped and whitewashed once a year at least; that the rooms were regularly cleaned and ventilated; that infirmaries were provided for the sick; and

[1] Reports of the Committee appointed to inquire into the State of the Gaols, 1729.

proper care taken to get them medical advice; that the naked should be clothed; that underground dungeons should be used as little as could be; and generally that such courses should be taken as would tend to restore and preserve the health of the prisoners. That such simple provisions should have been denied in Christian England, and in the days of Addison and Johnson, is not easy to conceive, after the changes of eighty years, brought about through the exertions of one strong man. Yet the corroborative evidence of the state of prisons leaves no room for doubt. Defoe and Fielding have both left descriptions of jail life, which, though relieved by gross humor, and animated by studies of eccentric character, are not less revolting than the plain and tragic revelations of Howard. Men were callous to sufferings which seemed inevitable to misfortune, as well as to crime. Even horrible catastrophes, when they occurred, excited no more than a passing interest. The jail distemper always raged more or less in the county town, and especially during assizes. Judges and juries were sometimes swept away by the awful pest;[1] and yet no one cared to remove the causes of the jail distemper, until the Howard-Popham bill was carried on the 2d of June, 1774.

It was one thing to have the bill carried in the House of Commons; it was another to have it carried into the jails. Most of the jailers were ignorant, rapacious fellows; and some of them were women — as a rule more ignorant and rapacious than the men. The new law struck at their interests, and cordial feeling towards it was not expected from human frailty. Howard resolved to see it executed with his own eyes; he caused the provisions of the act to be printed at his private cost, in large type, and he sent a copy to every jailer and warden in the three kingdoms, so that no one could be able to plead ignorance of the law, if detected

[1] Barker's *Chronicle*, 353.

in the flagrant violation of its provisions. He then recommenced his inspections — travelled into the west of England, into Ireland and Scotland. Beyond the special cause to which he had given up his time, he took little interest in political matters, though he entertained strong opinions about the unjust aggression of the government in America, and expressed these opinions in a way to render the possibility of his appearance in the House of Commons as an independent member extremely distasteful to ministers. When, therefore, an election took place for Bedford, and Howard's friends proposed him as a candidate, all the arts of corruption were used to keep him out. He was nevertheless elected. On the return being disputed, the election committee, which was completely under the minister's hand, allowed a number of pauper votes which had been bought up and recorded in favor of the opposition candidates, though these votes had been refused before — just enough to unseat Howard by a minority of four votes. "I was made a victim by the ministry," he writes to a friend; "most surely I should not have fallen in with their severe measures relative to the Americans; and my constant declaration that not one emolument of five shillings, were I in parliament, would I ever accept of, marked me out as an object of their aversion." It was a fortunate decision, as it left him to his own peculiar work. Set free from all other occupations, instead of embodying his observations on English prisons at once in a book, he thought it better to make a tour of France, the Austrian Netherlands, Holland, and Germany, to see the most famous and infamous prisons on the continent of Europe, collect their various laws and regulations, and compare their structure, their action, and results with those of our own. In Paris he was denied access to the prisons; but looking over the old legislation on the subject, he found a provision in an act of 1717, that any person wishing to distribute alms to the prisoners was to be admitted to the inte-

rior, and allowed to dispense his bounty with his own hand. The law had fallen into disuse, and was unknown to the keepers. Howard appealed to higher authority, and the validity of the old act was allowed. At some expense in charities, he inspected the Bicetre, the Force l'Évêque, and other places of confinement; but neither money nor interest could open the Bastile to his inspection. He once stepped inside its gates at some personal risk. A suppressed pamphlet, describing the interior, written by a man who had suffered confinement, he obtained after much trouble, brought back to England, translated, and gave it to the world in his own book, an offence which the French government never forgot and never forgave. At Ghent he examined with deep interest the Great Reformatory Prison, a model for all Europe, combining the elements of industry and privation, which are still esteemed the most efficacious means of reformation. At Amsterdam he was struck with the slight amount of crime in the Dutch cities, contrasting it as he did so fearfully with the crime in his own country. For one hundred years then past, the executions in Amsterdam, a city of 250,000 inhabitants, had averaged no more than one in twelve months. London with its 750,000 inhabitants, had an average of twenty-nine and a half executions a year, or, reckoning population against population, ten in London to one in Amsterdam.[1] In the United Provinces he found that the industrial system penetrated the jail. In England we thought only of punishing offences; there they sought to reclaim offenders for society. We put them into dungeons; they put them into workshops. They made the criminals *work* their way back to Freedom. Their professed maxims was — "Make them diligent and they will be honest." Howard did not forget the hint. In Germany he found little that was useful, much that was disgusting. In Hano-

[1] Janssen's *Tables*, 1772.

ver and Osnaburgh, under English rule, he found traces of torture. Hamburgh was less revolting, as were generally the commercial cities. He returned to England with his papers, plans, and rules, a voluminous collection, as original in character as it was humane in purpose; but before putting his materials in the printer's hands, he undertook another comprehensive tour through England, revising his former observations, adding new notes to the record, relieving distress, liberating poor debtors, superintending the operation of the new jail act; and when these enormous labors were completed after seven months of daily toil, the gains from this careful revision seemed so important to his mind, that he resolved to give his continental experiences the benefit of a similar collation, and also extend his researches into some countries the prisons of which he had not yet seen. He set out for Lyons, crossed to Geneva (where he was rejoiced as a republican to find only five persons in confinement), whence he passed on to Berne, through cantons in which there was not a single prisoner; he went on to Soleure and Basle, delighted with the cleanliness, the Christian discipline, and considerate government of all the jails of Switzerland, and struck into Germany and Holland, visiting or revisiting the most celebrated prisons. He returned to London, and published his remarkable book, *The State of Prisons in England and Wales*, in 1777. In collecting his materials he had spent between three and four years, travelling not less than 13,418 miles. He contrasted in its pages the condition of our own and of foreign prisons, very much to the disadvantage of the former. "The reader," he says, "will scarcely feel from my narrative the same emotion of shame and regret as the comparison excited in me on beholding the difference with my own eyes; but from the account I have given him of foreign prisons he may judge whether a design of reforming our own be merely visionary — whether idleness, debauchery, disease, and famine be the

necessary attendants of a prison, or only connected with it in our own ideas, for want of a more perfect knowledge and more enlarged views."

The book made a sensation. One of the first results was to give a new impulse to the question — What to do with our convicts? America refused to take them any longer; Australia had not yet offered itself as a receptacle for the rascality of England. Government was at its wit's end; and crotchety people were urging every kind of scheme on its attention. A hulk (the "Justicia") had been already stationed in the river, off the arsenal of Woolwich, for the reception of convicts, who were treated as in the worst prisons of the old school, so that every kind of disorder existed in the ship. Howard hoped for no success without a change of system; but his continental experience convinced him that home discipline was better for the criminal than deportation to a new country; and, after much consideration by ministers, his idea of trying *the discipline of hard work* was adopted, and Sir William Blackstone and Mr. Eden were requested to make out the draft of a bill for the creation of a fitting establishment. A new prison was needed for the new plans; no jail in the country could answer for a trial; and Howard volunteered to go abroad and collect plans and other precise information.

He went to Amsterdam, and carefully examined the spin-houses and rasp-houses for which that city was famous. He passed into Prussia, Saxony, Bohemia, and Austria, through the lines of the German armies commanded by the Great Frederick and the Emperor Joseph II. His fame had gone before him, and he was received with the greatest distinction in Berlin and Vienna. He spent a morning with the Prince of Prussia, and dined with Maria Theresa. From Vienna he went to Italy, which he traversed from Venice to Naples, inspecting prisons, hospitals, and workhouses, and carefully hoarding up the peculiar merit or fault of each, for

the use of Sir William Blackstone and his colleague. On his return from Naples towards Leghorn, he encountered a violent storm, which raged for three days with great fury. The little shallop, unmanageable, was driven on the Tuscan coast, but the inhabitants, fearful of plague, refused to allow the passengers to land. Driven back again upon the storm, they were carried by its force to the African shore, to be again driven off by the same fears. They had started from Civita Vecchia while the pest was raging there, and their foul bill of health alarmed Christian and Mohammedan alike. Howard suffered fearfully in health by this trial; and, after his prison labors were accomplished, and his health fully restored, he turned to the new and fearful enemy, and finally lost his life in an attempt to discover the cause and the remedy for plague.

During this rapid continental tour he travelled 4,600 miles. While in France his attention was again drawn to his old subject — the infamous neglect and unchristian treatment of prisoners of war. He was told that these prisoners were treated worse in England than elsewhere; that their loyalty was tampered with; and that they were systematically ill-used in order to compel them to forswear their allegiance, and enter the English service. Burning with indignation, he went to the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen, who expressed their astonishment at such assertions; and, on his saying that he meant to look into this affair for himself, they offered to assist his inquiries. Our prisoners of war had reason to be grateful for his interference.

The information obtained during his foreign tour was placed at the service of the House of Commons. A bill was introduced and passed for building two penitentiary houses in Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, or Essex (as might be determined afterwards), in which to try the experiment of a discipline of work. Howard was appointed first supervisor of this Act; Mr. Whatley of the Foundling Hos-

pital, second; and Howard was allowed to name the third, Dr. Fothergill.[1] The scheme, however, under official restraints, proceeded slowly; Howard felt that his life was being wasted in small quarrels and unimportant discussions with Mr. Whatley as to the sites of the proposed penitentiaries; and both Sir William Blackstone and Dr. Fothergill dying while Mr. Whatley was disputing, he wrote to Lord Bathurst, president of the council, begging the king's permission to resign his office. An impulse, however, had been given. Howard's ideas were adopted in many places. In all the new prisons erected from that time provision was made for setting the criminals at work. He turned his face to the continent, with a view to collect whatever might be useful to his countrymen in those lands which he had not yet visited; and began a new and longer journey, which gradually embraced the whole circle of Europe, his route lying through Holland, Schleswig, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Poland; thence back to London, and so on to Portugal, Spain, and France, and the Austrian Netherlands. This journey was full of curious and romantic incidents. At its completion Howard gave his collections to the public in a new edition of his *State of Prisons*, with appendices.

Being now free from serious responsibility as regards the subject of prisons, and being determined not to enter parliament (as he was again requested to do), he reverted to the terrible idea of the Plague. English commerce with the Levant was rapidly extending, and serious thoughts were entertained in official circles of establishing a regular quarantine (as at Marseilles and Venice) against all vessels arriving from the East. But nothing was known in England about lazarettos and quarantine establishments; and the plague itself (from vague historical recollections of the London pests of 1603 and 1665, when the disease swept

[1] Stat. 19 Geo. III. Cap. 74.

away each time one fifth of the population)[1] was regarded with a terror more superstitious than rational. Government desired information; Howard offered to procure it, and equipped himself for the journey. He proposed to begin his studies at Marseilles with the newest of the lazarettos; afterwards to visit those of Venice and Leghorn; and, having gained all preliminary information in these cities, to proceed to Smyrna and Constantinople, the proper home of the plague, and there study its symptoms and modes of treatment. The French government, however, mindful of the Bastile pamphlet, refused him a passport; so that, instead of gaining facilities for inspecting the lazaretto at Marseilles, he was peremptorily forbidden to set foot in the territory of France. Lord Carmarthen, our ambassador in Paris, tried in vain to remove the ban; but, as Howard considered that his journey would lose much of its interest, and its chief use as regarded his own country, if he missed the fine lazaretto at Marseilles, he defied the threats held out, put himself in a good disguise, and entered France in the usual way among travellers in a diligence. A police agent attended him to Paris, for the French ambassador at the Hague had received intelligence from the M. Le Noir, director of police in Paris, to keep watch over his movements; and it was by a miracle of rapid and courageous action that he escaped a dungeon in the Bastile. Sometimes as a French physician, sometimes as an exquisite of the Faubourg St. Germain, he traversed France as far as Marseilles, obtained admission to the lazaretto, and shelter in the house of a Huguenot pastor, although the police were on the look-out for him, with a description of his person in their hands. His courage, his disguise, and his perfect manners, threw them off their guard; yet the risks he ran were very serious, and he breathed more freely when he

[1] Petty's *Political Arithmetic*, 1686.

had crossed the frontier. "I have now taken a final leave of France," he wrote to a friend from Leghorn; "I am sensible that I ran a great risk, but I accomplished my object. Happy was I to arrive at Nice, out of the country of a deceitful, jealous, and ungenerous people." He went to Florence, Rome (where he had an interview with Pope Pius), and Naples; and thence to Smyrna, where his skill as a doctor opened all the prisons and hospitals to his inspection. He remained at Smyrna, performing a few simple cures which rumor vastly magnified, until a fatal form of the plague broke out, and he had first-rate opportunities of studying it. He went on to Constantinople, whither the fame of his cures had gone before, and as soon as he arrived he was called in by a great pasha to treat the case of his daughter, who had been given over, it was said, by all the Italian doctors. She recovered; and of course Howard's fame rose with his wonderful work. He confined his visits, however, to the pest-houses, the prisons, and hospitals; he said he was only a physician to the poor. Our ambassador, Sir Robert Ainslie, aware of his patriotic and humane object, offered him a home at the embassy. This he declined, as being unwilling to expose another to the fearful risk of contagion, and took up his residence in the house of a physician, to whom he could communicate the course of his daily experience, as well to receive sound advice as to prepare his host for prompt action in case he brought the plague home. But he bore a charmed life. The smitten fell dead at his feet. He went into infected caravansaries and into pest-houses whither physician, guide, and dragoman all refused to follow him. From these fearful visits he returned with a scorching pain across the temples, though an hour of fresh air and vigorous exercise served to carry it away. At length his researches were complete. With a trunk full of papers — plans of lazarettos, opinions of celebrated physicians living in the Levant, and copies of

regulations and instructions — he prepared to return, and wrote to inform his friends of his intention to cross overland to Vienna. But while his preparations for departure were in progress, the idea flashed across his mind that all his acquired knowledge, various as it was, had been obtained from others — was second-hand, not original; that he had seen not suffered the discipline of a European Lazaretto; and that, possibly, something of material import to the practical working of the scheme (the want of which would be felt as soon as the system was commenced, if it ever were commenced, in England) had escaped his notice. The fear was enough. Altering his plan, he resolved to return; to find a foul ship, make the voyage in her to Venice, and there undergo the usual confinement of the suspected in the famous lazaretto of that city. Such a plan was full of peril. A late ambassador, Mr. Murray, had died of the plague in that very lazaretto; but nothing would deter him from his purpose, and he departed. Plague broke out in the ship, and a strong man died in a few hours; yet he went on to Smyrna, deliberately sought out a foul vessel, took his berth and started for Venice. On the way they were attacked by pirates, when Howard astonished the Venetian sailors by his courage and by a lesson which he gave them in the noble art of gunnery. They acknowledged that the English physician had saved them from the slave market of Tunis or Tripoli. On the sixtieth day of the voyage they arrived in Venice, and were all transferred to the lazaretto, where Howard's health suffered severely from the confinement, though he was supported with the thought that he was gaining precious experience. His minute account of the discipline of this famous Lazaretto is most interesting.[1]

Howard came out of his confinement reduced to a skeleton, and flushed with fever. However anxious to get home

[1] *Lazarettos of Europe*, pp. 16–22.

(for a dreadful domestic calamity had occurred; his only child, now a young man, had lost his reason, and was under the charge of a keeper), he was too weak to travel for some days. He went to Trieste and Vienna, where he held a long and exceedingly curious interview with the Emperor, Joseph II., himself a reformer, or rather an innovator, during which the English gentleman told the German ruler some very unusual truths. He reached England in February, 1787, having been absent on his extraordinary mission sixteen months.

As soon as his domestic concerns were put into such order as they admitted, and his great work on the *Lazarettos of Europe* was published, Howard began a fresh and final review of the prisons of the three kingdoms. He visited all with care, and presented a Bible to each of those in the county towns. Vast improvements had already taken place in the management and discipline of the prisons, in the food, clothing, work, and Christian teaching of the prisoners. Foremost among the magistrates who adopted the new system were those of Manchester. They built on the banks of the Irwell a large prison, with an express view to carrying Howard's ideas into effect; and on the foundation-stone of the edifice they set this inscription, — "That there may remain to posterity a monument of the affection and gratitude of this country to that most excellent person, who has so fully proved the wisdom and humanity of the separate and solitary confinement of offenders, this prison is inscribed with the name of JOHN HOWARD." This final tour of the English jails occupied him for eighteen months; and the results of his inspection were recorded in a new edition of his *State of Prisons.*

While in the Levant he had enjoyed many opportunities of hearing the opinions of merchants and consular agents on the prospects of our trade with the East. It was said, that were it not for fear of the plague, that trade might be

at once doubled. As we were without quarantine establishments, the people were afraid of any ships from infected districts; the consequence of which fear was, that the Dutch ran away with the traffic, without taking sufficient care about the plague. So we lost the profits without escaping the risks, as the Dutch ships might as easily introduce the pest at second-hand as our own at first. This idea settled in Howard's mind, and helped to shape towards a more practical end those purposes which he pursued from purer and more romantic motives. In the postscript to his new book on *Lazarettos*, he told the public of his intention to follow up the new inquiries. "To my country," he said in a few noble and simple words, the last he addressed to it in print, "I commit the result of my past labors. It is my intention again to quit it for the purpose of revisiting Russia, Turkey, and some other countries, and extending my tour into the East. I am not insensible of the dangers that must attend such a journey. Should it please God to cut off my life in the prosecution of this design, let not my conduct be imputed to rashness or enthusiasm, but to a serious conviction that I am pursuing the path of duty." These words were prophetic.

From London he went to Riga, thence to St. Petersburg and Moscow, from which place he proposed to travel to Warsaw, and through Vienna to Constantinople. But the war overruled his plans. Russia and Turkey were struggling fiercely on the Dneiper and the Pruth. Bender had just fallen, and the Muscovites were hurrying their forces to the south. Sad as had been his experiences, Howard had seen nothing to compare in atrocity with the reckless waste of life in time of war. The roads were almost choked with dead bodies. Raw recruits, most of them too young to bear privation, were hurled by forced marches, and at every sacrifice, towards the theatre of war. They dropped, and were left to die. Hunger, hardship, fever, thinned their

ranks as they staggered on towards the Black Sea. Howard had no sympathy with military glory; and the sickening sights which he witnessed on the roads from Moscow to Kherson, disgusted him with the hypocrisy of Russia's boast of having become a civilized power. Even the great question of the plague was laid aside for a while, in presence of all these horrors to be brought to light, all these miseries to be assuaged. In his portmanteau he had carried out, for the use of his expected plague patients, a quantity of James's powders, a medicine believed to possess all save miraculous powers; and he thought he should do wisely in placing these powders at the service of the poor Russian serfs who were falling in crowds around him, the victims of an infernal military system. So he went down to the coasts of the Black Sea, visited the hospitals of Crement-schouk, Otschakow, St. Nicholas, Kherson, and other places. His letters and his notes in his journal are heart-rending. "They are dreadfully neglected. A heart of stone would almost bleed! The abuses of office are glaring, and I want not courage to tell them so." Russian officials, with the cunning of an Asiatic race, so soon as they saw that Howard would expose their cruelties, and disabuse the western public of its false estimate of Russian civilization, an estimate drawn from the splendid misrepresentations of Voltaire and those French theorists who were willing to depose Providence in favor of the Czars — began to throw dust in his eyes. They prepared the hospitals for his reception, removed the more unsightly objects, pretended that he had inspected all where he had seen only a few prepared wards; but his experience defeated these attempts at imposition, and his conductor gained nothing save the dishonor attaching to a mean trick. Whoever wishes to see the military system of Russia in its true character, as conducted in the villages and cities of the Muscovite empire, must study the memorials of Howard's last visit to Russia.

He died in the midst of his labors. He caught the camp fever at Kherson, from a young lady whom he attended as a physician, and died in that city on the morning of January 20, 1790, and was buried on the road to St. Nicholas.

JOHN BUNYAN.

JOHN BUNYAN, the most popular religious writer in the English language, was born at Elstow, about a mile from Bedford, in the year 1628. He may be said to have been born a tinker. The tinkers then formed a hereditary caste, which was held in no high estimation. They were generally vagrants and pilferers, and were often confounded with the gipsies, whom in truth they nearly resembled. Bunyan's father was more respectable than most of the tribe. He had a fixed residence and was able to send his son to a village school where reading and writing were taught.

The years of John's boyhood were those during which the puritan spirit was in the highest vigor all over England; and nowhere had that spirit more influence than in Bedfordshire. It is not wonderful, therefore, that a lad to whom nature had given a powerful imagination and sensibility which amounted to a disease, should have been early haunted by religious terrors. Before he was ten his sports were interrupted by fits of remorse and despair; and his sleep was disturbed by dreams of fiends trying to fly away with him. As he grew older, his mental conflicts become still more violent. The strong language in which he described them has strangely misled all his biographers except Mr. Southey. It has long been an ordinary practice with pious

writers to cite Bunyan as an instance of the supernatural power of divine grace to rescue the human soul from the lowest depths of wickedness. He is called in one book the most notorious of profligates; in another, the brand plucked from the burning. He is designated in Mr. Ivimey's History of the Baptists as the depraved Bunyan, the wicked tinker of Elstow. Mr. Ryland, a man once of great note among the Dissenters, breaks out into the following rhapsody: "No man of common sense and common integrity can deny that Bunyan was a practical atheist, a worthless contemptible infidel, a vile rebel to God and goodness, a common profligate, a soul-despising, a soul-murdering, a soul-damning, thoughtless wretch as could exist on the face of the earth. Now be astonished, O heavens, to eternity! and wonder, O earth and hell! while time endures. Behold this very man become a miracle of mercy, a mirror of wisdom, goodness, holiness, truth, and love." But whoever takes the trouble to examine the evidence will find that the good men who wrote this had been deceived by a phraseology which, as they had been hearing it and using it all their lives, they ought to have understood better. There cannot be a greater mistake than to infer from the strong expressions in which a devout man bemoans his exceeding sinfulness, that he had led a worse life than his neighbors. Many excellent persons, whose moral character from boyhood to old age has been free from any stain discernible to their fellow-creatures, have, in their autobiographies and diaries, applied to themselves, and doubtless with sincerity, epithets as severe as could be applied to Titus Oates or Mrs. Brownrigg. It is quite certain that Bunyan was, at eighteen, what, in any but the most austerely puritanical circles, would have been considered as a young man of singular gravity and innocence. Indeed, it may be remarked that he, like many other penitents who, in general terms, acknowledged themselves to have been the worst of mankind, fired up and

stood vigorously on his defence, whenever any particular charge was brought against him by others. He declares, it is true, that he had let loose the reins on the neck of his lusts, that he had delighted in all transgressions against the divine law, and that he had been the ringleader of the youth of Elstow in all manner of vice. But when those who wished him ill accused him of licentious amours, he called on God and the angels to attest his purity. No woman, he said, in heaven, earth, or hell, could charge him with having ever made any improper advances to her. Not only had he been strictly faithful to his wife; but he had, even before his marriage, been perfectly spotless. It does not appear from his own confessions, or from the railings of his enemies, that he ever was drunk in his life. One bad habit he contracted, that of using profane language; but he tells us that a single reproof cured him so effectually that he never offended again. The worst that can be laid to the charge of this poor youth, whom it has been the fashion to represent as the most desperate of reprobates, as a village Rochester, is that he had a great liking for some diversions, quite harmless in themselves, but condemned by the rigid precisians among whom he lived, and for whose opinion he had a great respect. The four chief sins of which he was guilty were dancing, ringing the bells of the parish church, playing at tipcat, and reading the History of Sir Bevis of Southampton. A Rector of the school of Laud would have held such a young man up to the whole parish as a model. But Bunyan's notions of good and evil had been learned in a very different school; and he was made miserable by the conflict between his tastes and his scruples.

When he was about seventeen, the ordinary course of his life was interrupted by an event which gave a lasting color to his thoughts. He enlisted in the parliamentary army, and served during the decisive campaign of 1645. All that we know of his military career is that, at the siege of Leices-

ter, one of his comrades, who had taken his post, was killed by a shot from the town. Bunyan ever after considered himself as having been saved from death by the special interference of Providence. It may be observed that his imagination was strongly impressed by the glimpse which he had caught of the pomp of war. To the last he loved to draw his illustrations of sacred things from camps and fortresses, from guns, drums, trumpets, flags of truce, and regiments arrayed, each under its own banner. His Great Heart, his Captain Boanerges, and his Captain Credence, are evidently portraits, of which the originals were among those martial saints who fought and expounded in Fairfax's army.

In a few months Bunyan returned home, and married. His wife had some pious relations, and brought him as her only portion, some pious books. And now his mind, excitable by nature, very imperfectly disciplined by education, and exposed, without any protection, to the infectious virulence of the enthusiasm which was then epidemic in England, began to be fearfully disordered. In outward things he soon became a strict Pharisee. He was constant in attendance at prayers and sermons. His favorite amusements were, one after another, relinquished, though not without many painful struggles. In the middle of a game of tipcat he paused, and stood staring wildly upwards with his stick in his hand. He had heard a voice asking him whether he would leave his sins and go to heaven, or keep his sins and go to hell; and he had seen an awful countenance frowning on him from the sky. The odious vice of bell-ringing he renounced; but he still for a time ventured to go to the church-tower and look on while others pulled the ropes. But soon the thought struck him that, if he persisted in such wickedness, the steeple would fall on his head; and he fled in terror from the accursed place. To give up dancing on the village green was still harder; and some months elapsed before he had the fortitude to part with this

darling sin. When this last sacrifice had been made, he was, even when tried by the maxims of that austere time, faultless. All Elstow talked of him as an eminently pious youth. But his own mind was more unquiet than ever. Having nothing more to do in the way of visible reformation, yet finding in religion no pleasures to supply the place of the juvenile amusements which he had relinquished, he began to apprehend that he lay under some special malediction; and he was tormented by a succession of fantasies which seemed likely to drive him to suicide or to Bedlam.

At one time he took it into his head that all persons of Israelite blood would be saved, and tried to make out that he partook of that blood; but his hopes were speedily destroyed by his father, who seems to have had no ambition to be regarded as a Jew.

At another time Bunyan was disturbed by a strange dilemma: "If I have not faith, I am lost; if I have faith, I can work miracles." He was tempted to cry to the puddles between Elstow and Bedford, "Be ye dry," and to stake his eternal hopes on the event.

Then he took up a notion that the day of grace for Bedford and the neighboring villages was passed; that all who were to be saved in that part of England were already converted; and that he had begun to pray and strive some months too late.

Then he was harassed by doubts whether the Turks were not in the right, and the Christians in the wrong. Then he was troubled by a maniacal impulse which prompted him to pray to the trees, to a broomstick, to the parish bull. As yet, however, he was only entering the valley of the Shadow of Death. Soon the darkness grew thicker. Hideous forms floated before him. Sounds of cursing and wailing were in his ears. His way ran through stench and fire, close to the mouth of the bottomless pit. He began to be haunted by a strange curiosity about the unpardonable sin, and by a

morbid longing to commit it. But the most frightful of all the forms which his disease took was a propensity to utter blasphemy, and especially to renounce his share in the benefits of the redemption. Night and day, in bed, at table, at work, evil spirits, as he imagined, were repeating close to his ear the words, "Sell him, sell him." He struck at the hobgoblins; he pushed them from him; but still they were ever at his side. He cried out in answer to them, hour after hour, "Never, never; not for thousands of worlds; not for thousands." At length, worn out by this long agony, he suffered the fatal words to escape him, "Let him go, if he will." Then his misery became more fearful than ever. He had done what could not be forgiven. He had forfeited his part of the great sacrifice. Like Esau, he had sold his birthright; and there was no longer any place for repentance. "None," he afterwards wrote, "knows the terrors of those days but myself." He has described his sufferings with singular energy, simplicity, and pathos. He envied the brutes, he envied the very stones in the streets, and the tiles on the houses. The sun seemed to withhold its light and warmth from him. His body, though cast in a sturdy mould, and though still in the highest vigor of youth, trembled whole days together with the fear of death and judgment. He fancied that this trembling was the sign set on the worst reprobates, the sign which God had put on Cain. The unhappy man's emotion destroyed his power of digestion. He had such pains that he expected to burst asunder like Judas, whom he regarded as his prototype.

Neither the books which Bunyan read, nor the advisers whom he consulted, were likely to do much good in a case like his. His small library had received a most unseasonable addition, the account of the lamentable end of Francis Spira. One ancient man of high repute for piety, whom the sufferer consulted, gave an opinion which might well have produced fatal consequences. "I am afraid," said

Bunyan, "that I have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost." "Indeed," said the old fanatic, "I am afraid that you have."

At length the clouds broke; the light became clearer and clearer; and the enthusiast, who had imagined that he was branded with the mark of the first murderer, and destined to the end of the arch traitor, enjoyed peace and a cheerful confidence in the mercy of God. Years elapsed, however, before his nerves, which had been so perilously overstrained, recovered their tone. When he had joined a Baptist society at Bedford, and was for the first time admitted to partake of the Eucharist, it was with difficulty that he could refrain from imprecating destruction on his brethren while the cup was passing from hand to hand. After he had been some time a member of the congregation, he began to preach; and his sermons produced a powerful effect. He was indeed illiterate; but he spoke to illiterate men. The severe training through which he had passed had given him such an experimental knowledge of all the modes of religious melancholy as he could never have gathered from books; and his vigorous genius, animated by a fervent spirit of devotion, enabled him not only to exercise a great influence over the vulgar, but even to extort the half contemptuous admiration of scholars. Yet it was long before he ceased to be tormented by an impulse which urged him to utter words of horrible impiety in the pulpit.

Counter-irritants are of as great use in moral as in physical diseases. It should seem that Bunyan was finally relieved from the internal sufferings which had embittered his life by sharp persecution from without. He had been five years a preacher, when the Restoration put it in the power of the Cavalier gentlemen and clergymen all over the country to oppress the Dissenters; and, of all the Dissenters whose history is known to us, he was perhaps the most hardly treated. In November, 1660, he was flung into Bed-

ford gaol; and there he remained, with some intervals of partial and precarious liberty, during twelve years. His persecutors tried to extort from him a promise that he would abstain from preaching; but he was convinced that he was divinely set apart and commissioned to be a teacher of righteousness, and he was fully determined to obey God rather than man. He was brought before several tribunals, laughed at, caressed, reviled, menaced, but in vain. He was facetiously told that he was quite right in thinking that he ought not to hide his gift; but that his real gift was skill in repairing old kettles. He was compared to Alexander the coppersmith. He was told that, if he would give up preaching, he should be instantly liberated. He was warned that, if he persisted in disobeying the law, he would be liable to banishment, and that, if he were found in England after a certain time, his neck would be stretched. His answer was, "If you let me out to-day, I will preach again to-morrow." Year after year he lay patiently in a dungeon, compared with which the worst prison now to be found in the island is a palace. His fortitude is the more extraordinary, because his domestic feelings were unusually strong. Indeed, he was considered by his stern brethren as somewhat too fond and indulgent a parent. He had several small children, and among them a daughter who was blind, and whom he loved with peculiar tenderness. He could not, he said, bear even to let the wind blow on her; and now she must suffer cold and hunger; she must beg; she must be beaten; "yet," he added, "I must, I must do it." While he lay in prison he could do nothing in the way of his old trade for the support of his family. He determined, therefore, to take up a new trade. He learned to make long tagged thread laces; and many thousands of these articles were furnished by him to the hawkers. While his hands were thus busied, he had other employment for his mind and lips. He gave religious instruction to his fellow-captives; and formed among them a

little flock, of which he was himself the pastor. He studied indefatigably the few books which he possessed. His two chief companions were the Bible and *Fox's Book of Martyrs*. His knowledge of the Bible was such that he might have been called a living concordance; and on the margin of his copy of the *Book of Martyrs* are still legible the ill-spelt lines of doggerel in which he expressed his reverence for the brave sufferers, and his implacable enmity to the mystical Babylon.

At length he began to write, and, though it was some time before he discovered where his strength lay, his writings were not unsuccessful. They were coarse, indeed, but they showed a keen mother-wit, a great command of the homely mother-tongue, an intimate knowledge of the English Bible, and a vast and dearly bought spiritual experience. They therefore, when the corrector of the press had improved the syntax and the spelling, were well received by the humbler class of Dissenters.

Much of Bunyan's time was spent in controversy. He wrote sharply against the Quakers, whom he seems always to have held in utter abhorrence. It is, however, a remarkable fact, that he adopted one of their peculiar fashions: his practice was to write, not November or December, but eleventh month and twelfth month.

He wrote against the liturgy of the Church of England. No two things, according to him, had less affinity than the form of prayer and the spirit of prayer. Those, he said with much point, who have most of the spirit of prayer, are all to be found in gaol; and those who have most zeal for the form of prayer are all to be found at the ale-house. The doctrinal articles, on the other hand, he warmly praised, and defended against some Arminian clergymen who had signed them. The most acrimonious of all his works, is his answer to Edward Fowler, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, an excellent man, but not free from the taint of Pelagianism.

Bunyan had also a dispute with some of the chiefs of the sect to which he belonged. He doubtless held with perfect sincerity the distinguishing tenet of that sect, but he did not consider that tenet as one of high importance; and willingly joined in communion with pious Presbyterians and Independents. The sterner Baptists, therefore, loudly pronounced him a false brother. A controversy arose which long survived the original combatants. In our own time the cause which Bunyan had defended with rude logic and rhetoric against Kiffin and Danvers was pleaded by Robert Hall with an ingenuity and eloquence such as no polemical writer has ever surpassed.

During the years which immediately followed the Restoration, Bunyan's confinement seems to have been strict. But as the passions of 1660 cooled, as the hatred with which the Puritans had been regarded while their reign was recent gave place to pity, he was less and less harshly treated. The distress of his family, and his own patience, courage, and piety, softened the hearts of his persecutors. Like his own Christian in the cage, he found protectors even among the crowd of Vanity Fair. The Bishop of the diocese, Dr. Barlow, is said to have interceded for him. At length the prisoner was suffered to pass most of his time beyond the walls of the gaol, on condition, as it should seem, that he remained within the town of Bedford.

He owed his complete liberation to one of the worst acts of one of the worst governments that England has ever seen. In 1671 the Cabal was in power. Charles II. had concluded the treaty by which he bound himself to set up the Roman Catholic religion in England. The first step which he took towards that end was to annul, by an unconstitutional exercise of his prerogative, all the penal statutes against the Roman Catholics; and, in order to disguise his real design, he annulled at the same time the penal statutes against Protestant non-conformists. Bunyan was consequently set

at large. In the first warmth of his gratitude he published a tract in which he compared Charles to that humane and generous Persian king who, though not himself blessed with the light of the true religion, favored the chosen people, and permitted them, after years of captivity, to rebuild their beloved temple. To candid men, who consider how much Bunyan had suffered, and how little he could guess the secret design of the court, the unsuspicious thankfulness with which he accepted the precious boon of freedom will not appear to require any apology.

Before he left his prison he had begun the book which has made his name immortal. The history of that book is remarkable. The author was, as he tells us, writing a treatise in which he had occasion to speak of the stages of the Christian progress. He compared that progress, as many others had compared it, to a pilgrimage. Soon his quick wit discovered innumerable points of similarity which had escaped his predecessors. Images came crowding on his mind faster than he could put them into words, quagmires and pits, steep hills, dark and horrible glens, soft vales, sunny pastures, a gloomy castle of which the court-yard was strewn with the skulls and bones of murdered prisoners, a town all bustle and splendor, like London on the Lord Mayor's Day, and the narrow path, straight as a rule could make it, running on up hill and down hill, through city and through wilderness, to the Black River and Shining Gate. He had found out, as most people would have said, by accident, as he would doubtless have said, by the guidance of Providence, where his powers lay. He had no suspicion, indeed, that he was producing a masterpiece. He could not guess what place his allegory would occupy in English literature; for of English literature he knew nothing. Those who suppose him to have studied the Fairy Queen might easily be confuted, if this were the proper place for a detailed estimation of the passages in

which the two allegories have been thought to resemble each other. The only work of fiction, in all probability, with which he could compare his Pilgrim, was his old favorite, the legend of Sir Bevis of Southampton. He would have thought it a sin to borrow any time from the serious business of his life, from his expositions, his controversies, and his lace tags, for the purpose of amusing himself with what he considered a mere trifle. It was only, he assures us, at spare moments that he returned to the House Beautiful, the Delectable Mountains, and the Enchanted Ground. He had no assistance. Nobody but himself saw a line till the whole was complete. He then consulted his pious friends. Some were pleased, others were much scandalized. It was a vain story, a mere romance, about giants, and lions, and goblins, and warriors, sometimes fighting with monsters, and sometimes regaled by fair ladies in stately palaces. The loose atheistical wits of Will's might write such stuff to divert the painted Jezebels of the court! but did it become a minister of the Gospel to copy the evil fashions of the world? There had been a time when the cant of such fools would have made Bunyan miserable. But that time was passed; and his mind was now in a firm and healthy state. He saw that, in employing fiction to make truth clear and goodness attractive, he was only following the example which every Christian ought to propose to himself; and he determined to print.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* stole silently into the world. Not a single copy of the first edition is known to be in existence. The year of publication has not been ascertained. It is probable that, during some months, the little volume circulated only among poor and obscure sectaries. But soon the irresistible charm of a book which gratified the imagination of the reader, with all the action and scenery of a fairy tale, which exercised his ingenuity by setting him to discover a multitude of curious analogies, which inter-

ested his feelings for human beings, frail like himself, and struggling with temptations from within and from without, which every moment drew a smile from him by some stroke of quaint yet simple pleasantry, and nevertheless left on his mind a sentiment of reverence for God and of sympathy for man, began to produce its effect. In puritanical circles, from which plays and novels were strictly excluded, that effect was such as no work of genius, though it were superior to the Iliad, to Don Quixote, or to Othello, can ever produce on a mind accustomed to indulge in literary luxury. In 1678 came forth a second edition with additions; and then the demand became immense. In the four following years the book was reprinted six times. The eighth edition, which contains the last improvements made by the author, was published in 1682, the ninth in 1684, the tenth in 1685. The help of the engraver had early been called in; and tens of thousands of children looked with terror and delight on execrable copperplates, which represented Christian thrusting his sword into Apollyon, or writhing in the grasp of Giant Despair. In Scotland, and in some of the colonies, the Pilgrim was even more popular than in his native country. Bunyan has told us, with very pardonable vanity, that in New England his dream was the daily subject of the conversation of thousands, and was thought worthy to appear in the most superb binding. He had numerous admirers in Holland, and among the Huguenots of France. With the pleasures, however, he experienced some of the pains of eminence. Knavish booksellers put forth volumes of trash under his name, and envious scribblers maintained it to be impossible that the poor ignorant tinker should really be the author of the book which was called his.

He took the best way to confound both those who counterfeited him and those who slandered him. He continued to work the Gold-field which he had discovered, and to draw

from it new treasures, not indeed with quite such ease and in quite such abundance as when the precious soil was still virgin, but yet with success which left all competition far behind. In 1684 appeared the second part of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It was soon followed by the *Holy War*, which, if the *Pilgrim's Progress* did not exist, would be the best allegory that ever was written.

Bunyan's place in society was now very different from what it had been. There had been a time when many Dissenting ministers, who could talk Latin and read Greek, had affected to treat him with scorn. But his fame and influence now far exceeded theirs. He had so great an authority among the Baptists that he was popularly called Bishop Bunyan. His episcopal visitations were annual. From Bedford he rode every year to London, and preached there to large and attentive congregations. From London he went his circuit through the country, animating the zeal of his brethren, collecting and distributing alms, and making up quarrels. The magistrates seem in general to have given him little trouble. But there is reason to believe that, in the year 1685, he was in some danger of again occupying his old quarters in Bedford gaol. In that year the rash and wicked enterprise of Monmouth gave the government a pretext for prosecuting the non-conformists; and scarcely one eminent divine of the Presbyterian, Independent, or Baptist persuasion remained unmolested. Baxter was in prison; Howe was driven into exile; Henry was arrested. Two eminent Baptists, with whom Bunyan had been engaged in controversy, were in great peril and distress. Danvers was in danger of being hanged; and Kiffin's grandsons were actually hanged. The tradition is that, during those evil days, Bunyan was forced to disguise himself as a wagoner, and that he preached to his congregation at Bedford in a smockfrock, with a cart whip in his hand. But soon a great change took place. James the Second was at open

war with the church, and found it necessary to court the Dissenters. Some of the creatures of the government tried to secure the aid of Bunyan. They probably knew that he had written in praise of the indulgence of 1672, and therefore hoped he might be equally pleased with the indulgence of 1687. But fifteen years of thought, observation, and commerce with the world had made him wiser. Nor were the cases exactly parallel. Charles was a professed Protestant: James was a professed Papist. The object of Charles's indulgence was disguised; the object of James's indulgence was patent. Bunyan was not deceived. He exhorted his hearers to prepare themselves by fasting and prayer for the danger which menaced their civil and religious liberties, and refused even to speak to the courtier who came down to remodel the corporation of Bedford, and who, as was supposed, had it in charge to offer some municipal dignity to the Bishop of the Baptists.

Bunyan did not live to see the Revolution. In the summer of 1688, he undertook to plead the cause of a son with an angry father, and at length prevailed on the old man not to disinherit the young one. This good work cost the benevolent intercessor his life. He had to ride through heavy rain. He came drenched to his lodgings on Snow Hill, was seized with a violent fever, and died in a few days. He was buried in Bunhill Fields; and the spot where he lies is still regarded by the non-conformists with a feeling which seems scarcely in harmony with the stern spirit of their theology. Many puritans to whom the respect paid by Roman Catholics to the reliques and tombs of saints seemed childish or sinful, are said to have begged with their dying breath that their coffins might be placed as near as possible to the coffin of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The fame of Bunyan during his life, and during the century which followed his death, was indeed great, but was almost entirely confined to religious families of the middle

and lower classes. Very seldom was he during that time mentioned with respect by any writer of great literary eminence. Young coupled his prose with the poetry of the wretched D'Urfey. In the Spiritual Quixote, the adventures of Christian are ranked with those of Jack the Giant-Killer or John Hickathrift. Cowper ventured to praise the great allegorist, but did not venture to name him. It is a significant circumstance that, till a recent period, all the numerous editions of the *Pilgrim's Progress* were evidently meant for the cottage and the servant's hall. The paper, the printing, the plates, were all of the meanest description. In general, when the educated minority and the common people differ about the merit of a book, the opinion of the educated minority finally prevails. The *Pilgrim's Progress* is perhaps the only book about which, after the lapse of a hundred years, the educated minority has come over to the opinion of the common people.

The attempts which have been made to improve and to imitate this book are not to be numbered. It has been done into verse; it has been done into modern English. The Pilgrimage of Tender Conscience, the Pilgrimage of Good Intent, the Pilgrimage of Seek Truth, the Pilgrimage of Theophilus, the Infant Pilgrim, the Hindoo Pilgrim, are among the many feeble copies of the great original. But the peculiar glory of Bunyan is that those who most hated his doctrines have tried to borrow the help of his genius. A Catholic version of his parable may be seen with the head of the Virgin in the title-page. On the other hand, those Antinomians for whom his Calvinism is not strong enough, may study the pilgrimage of Hephsibah, in which nothing will be found which can be construed into an admission of free agency and universal redemption. But the most extraordinary of all the acts of vandalism by which a fine work of art was ever defaced, was committed so late as the year 1853. It was determined to transform the *Pilgrim's Progress* into a Tractarian book.

The task was not easy; for it was necessary to make the two sacraments the most prominent objects in the allegory; and of all Christian theologians, avowed Quakers excepted, Bunyan was the one in whose system the sacraments held the least prominent place. However, the Wicket Gate became a type of baptism, and the House Beautiful of the Eucharist. The effect of this change is such as assuredly the ingenious person who made it never contemplated. For, as not a single pilgrim passes through the Wicket Gate in infancy, and as Faithful hurries past the House Beautiful without stopping, the lesson which the fable in its altered shape teaches, is that none but adults ought to be baptized, and that the Eucharist may safely be neglected. Nobody would have discovered from the original *Pilgrim's Progress* that the author was not a Pædobaptist. To turn his book into a book against Pædobaptism was an achievement reserved for an Anglo-Catholic Divine. Such blunders must necessarily be committed by every man who mutilates parts of a great work, without taking a comprehensive view of the whole.

HORACE.

QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS, the most popular, and next to Catullus and Virgil, the greatest of the Roman poets, was born VI. Id. Dec. A. U. C. 689, (Dec. 8, B. C. 65), during the consulship of L. Aurelius Cotta and L. Manlius Torquatus, and died November 27, A. U. C. 746, (B. C. 8). Horace is his own biographer. All the material facts of his personal history are to be gathered from the allusions scattered throughout his poems. A memoir attributed to Suetonius, of somewhat doubtful authority, furnishes a few additional details, but none of material moment, either as to his character or career. His father was a freedman,[1] and it was long considered that he had been a slave of some member of the great family of the Horatii, whose name he had assumed, in accordance with the common usage in such cases. But this theory has latterly given place to the suggestion, based upon inscriptions, that he was a freedman of the town of Venusia, (the modern Venosa,) the inhabitants of which belonged to the Horatian tribe.[2] The point is, however, of little importance, as the name, distinguished as

[1] Satires, I. vi. 6, 46–47.

[2] G. F. Grotefend, *Encyclopädie von Ersch und Gruber*, 2d sec. Vol. X. p. 497, Leipzig, 1833; and C. L. Grotefend, *Ephemerid. Literar.*, Darmstadt, 1834, p. 182; and Mommsen's *Inscriptiones Regni Neapolitini*, Lipsiæ, 1852.

it was, has derived more lustre from the poet than from any of the patriots and heroes by whom it had previously been borne. The elder Horace had received his manumission before his son was born.[1] He had realized a moderate independence in the vocation of *coactor*, a name borne indifferently by the collectors of public revenue, and of money at sales by public auction. To which of these classes he belonged is uncertain, but most probably to the latter.[2] With the fruits of his industry he had purchased a small property near Venusia, upon the banks of the Aufidus, the modern Ofanto, in the midst of the Apennines, upon the doubtful boundaries of Lucania and Apulia. Here the poet was born, and in this picturesque region of mountain, forest, and stream, the boy became imbued with the love of nature, which distinguished him through life. The third ode of the fourth book affords a pleasing glimpse of the child, wandering out of bounds along the slopes of Mount Vultur, and being found after an anxious search, asleep under a covering of laurel and myrtle leaves, which the wild pigeons had spread to shield this special favorite of the gods from the snakes and wild animals. The augury of the future poet, said to have been drawn from the incident at the time, was no doubt an after-thought of the poet's own, but the picture which the lines present of the strayed child asleep, with his hands full of spring flowers is welcome, whatever may be thought of the omen. In his father's house, and in those of the Apulian peasantry around him, Horace had opportunities of becoming familiar with the simple virtues of the poor, — their independence, integrity, chastity, and homely worth, which he loved to contrast with the luxury and vice of imperial Rome. Of his mother no mention occurs, directly or indirectly, throughout his poems, and it is reasonable to infer from this circumstance, taken in connection with the indications which

[1] Satires, I. vi., 8. [2] Satires, I. vi., 86.

they present of strong natural affection, that she died in his infancy. He appears also to have been an only child. No doubt he had at an early age given evidence of superior powers, and to this it may have been in some measure owing that his father thought him worthy of a higher education than could be obtained under a provincial schoolmaster,[1] and, although but ill able to afford it, carried him to Rome when about twelve years old, and gave him the best education which the capital could supply. No expense was spared to save the boy from any sense of inferiority among his fellow-scholars of the highest ranks. He was waited on by numerous slaves, as though he were the heir to a considerable fortune. But at the same time he was not allowed to entertain any shame for his own order, or to aspire to a position which he was unequal to maintain. His father taught him to look forward to filling some situation akin to that in which he had himself acquired a competency, and to feel that in any sphere culture and self-respect must command influence, and afford the best guarantee for happiness. Under the stern tutorage of Orbilius Pupillus, a grammarian of high standing, richer in reputation than gold, whom the poet has condemned to a bad immortality for his flogging propensities, he learned grammar, and became familiar with the earlier Latin writers, and with Homer. He also acquired such other branches of instruction as were usually learned by the sons of Romans of the higher ranks. But what was of still more importance, during this critical period of his first introduction to the seductions of the capital, he enjoyed the advantage of his father's personal superintendence, and of a moral training, which kept him aloof, not merely from the indulgence, but even from the contact of vice. His father went with him to all his classes,[2] and being himself a man of shrewd observation and natural humor, he gave his son's

[1] Satires, I. vi., 71, *et seq.* [2] Satires, I. vi., 18, *et seq.*

a practical bearing, by directing his attention to the s and vices of the luxurious and dissolute society around m,[1] and showing their incompatibility with the dictates of reason and common sense. From this admirable father, Horace appears to have inherited that manly independence for which he was remarkable, and which, while assigning to all ranks their due influence and respect, never either over-estimates or compromises its own.

Under the homely exterior of the Apulian freedman, we see the soul of the gentleman. His influence on his son was manifestly great. In the full maturity of his powers Horace penned a tribute to his worth,[2] with a fervor manifestly prompted by the full heart of a man who had often had cause to feel the blessings of that influence throughout the vicissitudes of a chequered life. It had given tone and strength to his character, and in the midst of manifold temptations had kept him true to himself and his genius.

At what age Horace left his father is uncertain. Most probably this event occurred before he left Rome for Athens to complete his education, as was then the practice, in the Greek literature and philosophy, under native teachers. This he did some time between the age of seventeen and twenty. At Athens he found many young men of the leading Roman families — Bibulus, Acidinus, Messala, and the younger Cicero — engaged in the same pursuits with himself. His works prove him to have been no careless student of the classics of Grecian literature, and with a natural enthusiasm he made his first poetical essays in their flexible and noble language. With his usual good sense, however, he soon abandoned the hopeless task of emulating the Greek writers on their own ground, and directed his efforts to transfusing into his own language some of the grace and melody of these masters of song.[3] In the political lull be-

[1] Satires, I. vi., 105, *et seq.*
[2] Satires, I. vi., 68, *et seq.*
[3] Satires, I. x., 31–35.

tween the battle of Pharsalia, A. U. C. 706 (B. C. 48), and the death of Julius Cæsar, A. U. C. 710 (B. C. 44), Horace was enabled to devote himself without interruption to the tranquil pursuits of the scholar. But when after the latter event Brutus came to Athens, and the patrician youth of Rome, fired with zeal for the cause of republican liberty, joined his standard, Horace was infected by the general enthusiasm, and accepted a military command in the army which was destined to encounter the legions of Anthony and Octavius. His rank was that of tribune, equivalent to a colonelcy of foot in our own army, and for this he must have been indebted either to the personal friendship of Brutus or to an extraordinary dearth of officers, seeing that he was not only without experience or birth to recommend him, but possessed no particular aptitude, physical or moral, for a military life. His appointment excited jealousy among his brother officers, who considered that the command of a Roman legion should have been reserved for men of nobler blood.[1] It was probably here that he first came into direct collision with the aristocratic prejudices which the training of his father had taught him to defy, and which, at a subsequent period, grudged to the freedman's son the friendship of the emperor and of Mæcenas. At the same time he had doubtless a strong party of friends, who had learned to appreciate his genius and attractive qualities. It is certain that he secured the esteem of his commanders, and bore an active part in the perils and difficulties of the campaign, which terminated in a total defeat of the republican party at Philippi, A. U. C. 712 (B. C. 42). A playful allusion by himself to the events of that disastrous field[2] has been turned by many of his commentators into an admission of his own cowardice. This is absurd. Such a confession is the very last which any man, least of all a Roman, would

[1] Satires, I. vi., 46, *et seq.* [2] Odes, II. vi., 9, *et seq.*

make. Horace says, addressing his friend Pompeius Varius:—

> "With thee I shared Philippi's fiery flight,
> My shield behind me left, which was not well,
> When all that brave array was broke, and fell
> In the vile dust full many a towering wight."

Such an allusion to the loss of his shield could only have been dropped by a man who felt that he had done his duty, and that it was known that he had done it. The lines may thus be safely regarded, according to the views of Lessing and others, as a not ungraceful compliment to his friend, who continued the struggle against the triumvirate with the party who threw themselves into the fleet of Sextus Pompeius. This interpretation is confirmed by the language of the next verse, where, in the same spirit, he applies the epithet "paventem" (craven) to himself.

> "But me, poor craven, swift Mercurius bore,
> Wrapp'd in a cloud through all the hostile din,
> While war's tumultuous eddies, closing in,
> Swept thee away into the strife once more."

It was no shame in Horace to have despaired of a cause which its leaders had given up. After the suicide of Brutus and Cassius the continuance of the contest was hopeless; and Horace may in his short military career have seen, in the jealousy and selfish ambition of many of his party, enough to make him suspicious of success, even if that had been attainable. Republicans who sneered at the freedman's son were not likely to found any system of liberty worthy of the name.

When Horace found his way back to Italy it was to find his paternal acres confiscated. His life was spared, but nothing was left him to sustain it but his pen and his good spirits. He had to write for bread — *Paupertas impulit*

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audax ut versus facerem[1] — and in so doing he appears to have acquired not only considerable repute, but also sufficient means to purchase the place of scribe in the [illegible] office, a sort of sinecure Clerkship of the Treasury, which he continued to hold for many years, if not to the close of his life.[2] It was upon his return to Rome that he made the acquaintance of Virgil and Varius, who were already famous, and to them he was indebted for his introduction to Mæcenas. The particulars of his first interview with his patron he has himself recorded.[3] It is a curious circumstance in the history of a friendship, among the closest and most affectionate on record, that nine months elapsed after their meeting before Mæcenas again summoned the poet to his house, and enrolled him in the list of his intimate friends. The event took place in the third year after the battle of Philippi ; and as the only claim of Horace, the man of humble origin and the retainer of a defeated party, to the notice of the minister of Augustus must have been his literary reputation, it is obvious that even at this early period he had established his position among the wits and men of letters in the capital. The acquaintance rapidly ripened into mutual esteem. It secured the position of the poet in society, and the generosity of the statesman placed him above the anxieties of a literary life. Throughout the intimate intercourse of thirty years which ensued there was no trace of condescension on the one hand, nor of servility on the other. Mæcenas gave the poet the place next his heart. He must have respected the man who never used his influence to obtain those favors which were within the disposal of the emperor's minister, who cherished an honest pride in his own station, and who could be grateful without being obsequious. Horace is never weary of acknowledg-

[1] Epistles, II. ii., 51.
[2] Satires, II. vi., 36.
[3] Satires, I. vi., 55, *et seq.*

ing how much he ow[illegible]nd. When he praises him, it is without flattery. When he soothes his anxieties, or calms his fears, the sincerity of his sympathy is apparent in the warmth of his words. When he resists his patron's wishes, he is firm without rudeness. When he sports with his foibles, he is familiar without the slightest shade of impertinence.

By Mæcenas Horace was introduced to Octavius, most probably soon after the period just referred to. In A. U. C. 717, a year after Horace had been admitted into the circle of his friends, Mæcenas went to Brundusium, charged by Octavius to negotiate a treaty with Marcus Antonius. On this journey he was accompanied by Horace, who has left a graphic record of its incidents.[1] It is probable that on this occasion or about this time the poet was brought to the notice of the future emperor. Between the time of his return from this journey and the year 722, Horace, who had in the mean time given to the world many of his poems, including the ten *Satires* of the first book, received from Mæcenas the gift of the Sabine farm, which at once afforded him a competency and all the pleasures of a country life. The gift was a slight one for Mæcenas to bestow, but he no doubt made it as the fittest and most welcome which he could have offered to his friend. It made Horace happy. It gave him leisure and amusement, and opportunities for that calm intercourse with nature which he "needed for his spirit's health." Never was a gift better bestowed or better requited. It at once prompted much of that poetry which has made Mæcenas famous, and has afforded ever new delight to successive generations. The Sabine farm was situated in a romantic valley about fifteen miles from Tibur (Tivoli), and among its other charms, possessed the valuable attraction for Horace, that it was within an easy distance of

[1] Satires, I. v.

Rome. When his spirits wanted the stimulus of society or the bustle of the capital, which they often did, his ambling mule could speedily convey him thither; and when jaded on the other hand by

> "The noise, and strife, and questions wearisome,
> And the vain splendors of imperial Rome,"

he could by the same easy means of transport, in a few hours bury himself among the hills, and there, under the shadow of his favorite Lucretilis, or by the banks of the Digentia, either stretch himself to dream upon the grass, lulled by the murmurs of the stream, or look after the culture of his fields, and fancy himself a farmer. The site of this farm has been pretty accurately ascertained, and it is at the present day a favorite resort of travellers, especially of Englishmen, who visit it in such numbers, and trace its features with so much enthusiasm, that the resident peasantry, "who cannot conceive of any other source of interest in one so long dead and unsainted, than that of co-patriotism or consanguinity," believe Horace to have been an Englishman.[1] The property was of moderate size, and produced corn, olives, and wine, but was not highly cultivated. Here Horace spent a considerable part of every year. Latterly, when his health failed, he passed the winter in the milder air of a villa at Tivoli. The Sabine farm was very retired, being about four miles from Varia (Vico Varo), the nearest town, well covered with timber, and traversed by a small but sparkling stream. It gave employment to five families of free *coloni*, who were under the superintendence of a bailiff; and, besides these, eight slaves were attached to the poet's establishment. With his inexpensive habits this little property was sufficient for all his wants (*Satis beatus unicis Sabinis*). Here he could enter-

[1] Letter by Mr. Dennis. — Milman's *Horace*, London, 1849, p. 109.

tain a stray friend from town, — his patron Mæcenas, upon occasion, — and the delights of this agreeable retreat and the charm of the poet's society, were doubtless more than a compensation for the plain fare or the thin home-grown wine, *Vile Sabinum*, with which its resources alone enabled him to regale them.

The life of Horace from the time of his intimacy with Mæcenas appears to have been one of comparative ease and of great social enjoyment. Augustus soon admitted him to his favor, and sought to attach him to his person in the capacity of secretary. This offer Horace was prudent and firm enough to decline; while at the same time he had the tact not to offend the master of the world by his refusal. To the close of his life his favor at court continued without a cloud. Augustus not only liked the man, but entertained a profound admiration for the poet. Believing in the immortality of his writings, it was natural the emperor should cultivate the good-will and seek to secure the "deathless meed" of his favorite's song. That Horace had fought with Brutus against him was no prejudice. To have espoused the cause, and enjoyed the confidence of one whose nobility of purpose his adversaries never scrupled to acknowledge, formed, indeed, in itself a claim upon his successful rival's esteem. Horace was no renegade; he was not ashamed of the past, and Mæcenas and Augustus were just the men to respect him for his independence, and to like him the better for it. They could appreciate his superiority to the herd of time-servers around them; and like all the greatest actors on the political stage, they were above the petty rancors of party jealousy, or the desire to enforce a renunciation of convictions opposite to their own. It was by never stooping to them unduly that Horace secured their esteem, and maintained himself upon a footing of equality with them as nearly as the difference of rank would allow. There is no reason to suspect Horace, in the praises which

he has recorded of Augustus, either of insincerity or sycophancy. He was able to contrast the comparative security of life and property, the absence of political turmoil, and the development of social ease and happiness, which his country enjoyed under the masterly administration of Augustus, with the disquietudes and strife under which it had languished for so many years. The days of a republic had gone by, and an enlightened despotism must have been welcomed by a country shaken by a long period of civil commotion, and sick of seeing itself played for as the stake of reckless and ambitious men. He was near enough to the councils of the world's master to see his motives and to appreciate his policy; and his intimate personal intercourse with both Augustus and Mæcenas no doubt enabled him to do fuller justice both to their intentions and their capacity, than was possible perhaps to any other man of his time. The envy which his intimacy with these two foremost men of all the world for a time excited in Roman society by degrees gave way, as years advanced, and the causes of their esteem came to be better understood. Their favor did not spoil him. He was ever the same kindly, urbane, and simple man of letters he had originally been. He never presumed upon his position, or looked superciliously on others less favored than himself. At all times generous and genial, years only mellowed his wisdom, and gave a sharper lustre to the beauty of his verse.

The unaffected sincerity of his nature, and the rich vein of his genius, made him courted by the rich and noble.[1] He mixed on easy terms with the choicest society of Rome, and what a society must that have been which included Virgil, Varius, Plotius, Tibullus, Pollio, and a host of others, who were not only ripe scholars, but had borne and were bearing a leading part in the great actions and events of

[1] Odes, II. xvii., 9, *et seq.*

that memorable epoch? It is to this period that the composition of his principal odes is to be attributed. To these, of all his writings, Horace himself ascribed the greatest value, and on these he rested his claims to posthumous fame. They were the result of great labor, as he himself indicates: "Operosa parvus Carmina fingo,"[1] and yet they bear preëminently the chalm of simplicity and ease. He was the first to mould the Latin tongue to the Greek lyric measures; and his success in this difficult task may be estimated from the fact, that as he was the first so was he the greatest of the Roman lyrists. Quinctilian's criticism upon him can scarcely be improved: "Lyricorum Horatius fere solus legi dignus. Nam et insurgit aliquando, et plenus est jucunditatis et gratiæ, et variis figuris, et verbis felicissime audax." In this airy and playful grace, in happy epithets, in variety of imagery, and exquisite felicity of expression, the *Odes* are still unsurpassed among the writings of any period or language. If they want the inspiration of a great motive or the fervor and resonance of the finest lyrics of Greece, they possess at all events an exquisite grace and terseness of expression, a power of painting an image or expressing a thought in the fewest and fittest words, and a melody of tone, which imbue them with a charm quite peculiar, and have given them a hold upon the minds of educated men, which no change of taste has shaken. That they are inferior to his Greek models is not to be wondered at. Even although Horace had possessed the genius of Pindar or Sappho, it is doubtful whether, writing in an artificial language, which he was compelled to make more artificial by the adoption of Grecian terms of expression, and being therefore without the free and genial medium of expression which they had at command, he could have found an adequate utterance for his inspiration. But his

[1] Odes, IV. ii., 31.

genius was akin to neither of these; and that good sense, which is his great characteristic, withheld him from ever either soaring too high or attempting to sustain his flight too long. He knew the measure of his powers, and in his greatest efforts, therefore, no undue strain upon them is to be detected. His power of passion is limited, and his strokes of pathos are few and slight. Above all, he did not possess the faculty, which, in a lyrical writer, is the highest, of losing himself in a great theme. Whatever subject he treats, we never lose sight of the poet in the poem. This quality, while it is fatal to lyric poetry of the highest class, helps, however, to heighten the charm of the mass of his odes, especially those which are devoted to his friends, or which breathe the delight with which the contact with the ever fresh beauties of natural scenery inspired him. Into these he throws his whole heart, and in them we feel the fascination which made him beloved by those who came within the circle of his personal influence, and which makes him as it were the well known and intimate friend of all to whom his writings are a familiar study. Horace was not and could not have been a national poet. He wrote only for cultivated men, and under the shadow of a court. The very language in which he wrote must have been unintelligible to the people, and he had none of those popular sympathies which inspire the lyrics of Burns or Béranger. The Roman population of his time was perhaps as little likely to command his respect as any which the world has ever seen; and there was no *people*, in the sense in which we understand the word, to appeal to. And yet Horace has many points in common with Burns. "A man's a man for a' that," in the whole vein of its sentiment is thoroughly Horatian; but the glow which kindles the heart and fires the brain is subdued to a temperate heat in the gentler and physically less energetic nature of Horace. In his amatory verses the same distinction is visible. None

of his erotic poems are vivified by those gushes of emotion which animate the love poetry of the poets we have named, and of other modern song writers. Never indeed was love less ideal or intense in a poet of unquestionable power. Horace is not insensible to beauty. No writer hits off with greater neatness the portrait of a beauty, or conjures up more skilfully before his reader an image of seductive grace. But the fire of genuine passion is wanting. Horace's ardor seems never to have risen above the transient flush of desire. His heart is whole though Cupid may have clapped him on the shoulder. The Lalages and Lyces, the Glyceras and Phrynes of his *Odes* are pretty playthings of an hour, who amused his fancy and delighted his senses, but never robbed him of a night's repose or of a day's appetite. The attempt to make them out as real objects of attachment, is one of the many follies in which his commentators have wasted much dreary labor. Horace might, no doubt, have sung of himself, like Béranger, in his youth, —

> "J'avais vingt ans, une folle maitresse,
> Des francs amis, et l'amour de chansons," —

and even when he could count eight lustres, despite his own protest,[1] his senses were probably not dead to the attractions of a fine ankle, or a pretty face, or to the fascinations of a sweet smile, or a musical voice. But his passions were too well controlled, and his love of ease too strong, to have admitted of so many flirtations as would be implied in the supposition that Tyndaris, Myrtale, and a score of others, were actual favorites of the bard. To sing of beauty has always been the poet's privilege and delight; and to record the lover's pains an easy and popular theme. Horace, the wit and friend of wits, was not likely to be out of the mode,

[1] Odes, II. 4, 21, *et seq.*

and so he sang of love and beauty according to his fashion. Very airy and playful and pleasant is that fashion, and, for his time, in the main comparatively pure and chaste; but we seek in vain for the tenderness, the negation of self, and the pathos, which are the soul of all true love poetry. "His love ditties," it has been well said, "are, as it were, like flowers, beautiful in form, and rich in hues, but without the scent that breathes to the heart." It is certain that many of them are merely imitations of Greek originals.

His *Satires* and *Epistles* are less read, yet they are perhaps more intrinsically valuable than his lyric poetry. They are of very various merit, written at different periods of his life, and although the order of their composition may be difficult to define with certainty, much may be inferred, even from the internal evidence of style and subject, as to the development of the poet's genius. This subject has engaged much of the attention of the commentators, and all concur in placing the *Satires* first, and the *Epistles*, including the *Epistle to the Pisos*, *De Arte Poeticâ*, last in the order of date. As reflecting "the age and body of the time," they possess the highest historical value. Through them the modern scholar is able to form a clearer idea of the state of society in Rome in the Augustan age than of any other phase of social development in the history of nations. Mingling, as he did, freely with men of all ranks and passions, and himself untouched by the ambition of wealth or influence which absorbed them in the struggle of society, he enjoyed the best of opportunities for observation, and he used them diligently. Horace's observation of character is subtle and exact, his knowledge of the heart is profound, his power of graphic delineation great; a genial humor plays over his verses, and a kindly wisdom dignifies them. Never were the maxims of social prudence and practical good sense inculcated in so pleasing a form as in the *Epistles*. The vein of his satire is delicate yet racy, and he stimulates

and amuses, but rarely offends by indelicacy, or outrages by coarseness. He does not spare himself upon occasion. His sarcasms, moreover, have no spice of malignity, neither are they tinged by the satirist's vice of vaunting his superiority to his neighbors. For fierceness of invective, or loftiness of moral tone he is inferior to Juvenal; but the vices of his time were less calculated to provoke the "sæva indignatio," or to call for the stern moral censure of the satirist of a more recent date. He deals rather with the weakness and follies, than with the vices or crimes of mankind, and his appeals are directed to their judgment and practical sense rather than to their conscience. The idea of duty or absolute right is not a prominent one with Horace. He inculcates what is fitting and decorous, and tends most to tranquillity of mind and body, rather than the severe virtues of a high standard of moral purity. To live at peace with the world, to shun the extremes of avarice, luxury, and ambition, to outrage none of the laws of nature, to enjoy life wisely, and not to load it with cares which the lapse of a few brief years will demonstrate to be foolishness, is very nearly the sum of his philosophy. Of religion, as we understand it, he had little. He was, however, too observant of the world around him, and too habitually accustomed to look into his own soul, not to have been profoundly impressed with the evidences of Supreme Wisdom governing the machine of the universe, and to have felt aspirations for a future in which the mysteries of the present world should find a solution. Although himself little of a practical worshipper — *parcus deorum cultor et infrequens* — he respected the sincerity of others in their belief in the old gods. But in common with the more vigorous intellects of the time, he had outgrown the effete creed of his countrymen. He could not accept the mythology, about which the forms of the contemporary worship still clustered. The relation of the universe to its Maker was a mystery to him, and

the agency of an active Providence, if it occasionally startled him out of the easy indifference of a vain philosophy, seems to have been by no means a permanent conviction of his mind, influencing his actions, or giving a lofty sweep to his speculations. The morality of enlightened and far-seeing wisdom was attainable by such a mind, and it was attained; but to the divine spirit, which raised some of the ancient writers almost to a level with the inspired authors of the books of our faith, Horace has no claim. As a living and brilliant commentary on life, as a storehouse of maxims of practical wisdom, couched in language the most apt and concise, as sketches of men and manners, which will be always fresh and always true, because they were true once, and because human nature will always reproduce itself under analogous circumstances, his *Satires*, and still more his *Epistles*, will have a permanent value for mankind. In these, too, as in his *Odes*, Horace helped materially in giving to the Latin language the highest amount of polish of which it is susceptible.

At no time very robust, Horace's health appears to have declined some years before his death. He was doomed to see some of his most valued friends drop into the grave before him. This to him, who gave to friendship the ardor which other men give to love, was the severest wound that time could bring. Youth, and spirits, and health, the inevitable decay of nature, saddened the thoughtful poet in his solitude, and tinged the gayest society with melancholy. But the loss of friends, the brothers of his soul, of Virgil, Quinctilius, Tibullus, and others, and ultimately of Mæcenas, without that hope of reunion which springs from the cheering faith which was soon afterwards to be revealed to the world, must have by degrees stripped life of most of its charms. *Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes*[1] is a cheerless

[1] Epistles, II. ii., 55.

reflection to the man who has no assured hope beyond the present time. Mæcenas's health was a source of deep anxiety to him, and one of the most exquisite odes (the 17th of the 2nd book), addressed to him, in answer to some outburst of despondency, while it expresses the depth of the poet's regard, bears in it the tones of a man somewhat weary of the world: —

"Ah! if untimely fate should snatch thee hence,
Thee, of my soul a part,
Why should I linger on, with deaden'd sense,
And ever aching heart,
A worthless fragment of a fallen shrine?
No, no! One day beholds thy death and mine!

"Think not that I have sworn a bootless oath!
Yes, we shall go, shall go,
Hand linked in hand, whene'er thou leadest, both
The last sad road below!"

The prophecy seems to have been realized almost to the letter. The same year (A. U. C. 786, B. C. 8) witnessed the death of both Horace and Mæcenas. The latter died in the middle of the year, bequeathing his friend, in almost his last words, to the care of Augustus: *Horatii Flacci, ut mei, esto memor.* On the 27th of November, when he was on the eve of completing his fifty-seventh year, Horace himself died, of an illness so sharp and sudden, that he was unable to make his will in writing. He declared it verbally before witnesses, leaving the little all which he possessed to Augustus. He was buried on the Esquiline Hill, near his patron and friend Mæcenas. No trace of the tombs of either remains; but the name and fame of both are inextricably entwined, and can only perish with the decay of literature itself. The fame of Horace was at once established. In the days of Juvenal he shared with Virgil the doubtful

honor of being a school-book.[1] That honor he still enjoys; but it is only by minds matured by experience and reflection that Horace can be thoroughly appreciated. To them the depth of his observation, and the reach of his good sense are made daily more apparent; and the verses which charmed their fancy or delighted their ear in youth, became the counsellors of their manhood, or the mirror which focalizes for their old age the gathered wisdom of a lifetime. No writer is so often quoted, and simply because the thoughts of none are more pertinent to men's "business and bosoms" in the concerns of every-day life, amid the jostle of a crowded and artificial state of society; and because the glimpses of nature, in which his writings abound, come with the freshness of truth, alike to the jaded dwellers in cities, and to those who can test them day by day in the presence of nature herself. To Petrarch and Wordsworth he was a favorite study. Richard Hooker made him a manual. Louis XVIII. had him by heart; and there is scarcely a statesman of eminence in whose mouth his sayings are not household words.

There are no authentic busts or medallions of Horace, and his descriptions of himself are vague. He was short in stature; his eyes and hair were dark, but the latter was early silvered with gray. He suffered at one time from an affection of the eyes, and seems to have been by no means robust in constitution. His habits were temperate and frugal, as a rule, although he was far from insensible to the charms of a good table and good wine, heightening and heightened by the zest of good company. But he seems to have had neither the stomach nor the taste for habitual indulgence in the pleasures of the table. In youth he was hasty and choleric, but easily placable; and to the last he probably shared in some degree the irritability which

[1] Juvenal, Satires, VII., 226.

he ascribes to his class. At the same time, if his writings be any index to his mind, his temper was habitually sweet and well under control. Like all playful men, a tinge of melancholy colored his life, if that is to be called melancholy which is more properly only that sense of the incompleteness and insufficiency of life for the desires of the soul, which must be deeply seated in all earnest natures. Latterly he became corpulent, and sensitive to the severity of the seasons, and sought at Baiæ and Tivoli the refreshment or shelter which his mountain retreat had ceased to yield to his delicate frame.

The chronology of the poems of Horace has been the source of much critical controversy. The earlier labors of Bentley, Masson, Dacier, and Sanadon have been followed up in modern times by those of Passow, Walckenaer, Weber, Grotefend, and Stallbaum abroad, and of Tate and Milman at home. As the subject is not one which admits of certainty, the speculation is endless, and must always be in a great measure unsatisfactory. The general result may be stated as follows. The *Satires* and *Epodes* were first in the order of composition, having been written between the years 713 and 725, after the return of Horace to Rome, and before the close of the civil wars consequent upon the defeat of Antony and his party. The two first books of *Odes* appeared between this period and the year 730. Then followed the first book of *Epistles*. The third book of *Odes* appears to have been composed about the year 735, the *Carmen Seculare* in 737, and the fourth book of *Odes* between 737 and 741. The second book of *Epistles* may be assigned to the period between 741 and 746; and to the same period may be ascribed the composition of the *Epistle to the Pisos*. The results of the speculations of Bentley and several of the leading critics are presented in a tabular form in the admirable edition of Horace published by Firmin Didot, Paris, 1855, with the commentary of Dübner, which

is a model at once of typographical beauty and editorial skill.

For a list of the best editions of Horace, and of the numerous works on the topography and chronology of his poems, reference may be made to Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, London, 1850, *sub voce* Horatius.

The translations of *Horace* into all the European languages are numerous. The English versions are more numerous than successful. Pope and Swift, in their imitations, have caught more of his manner than any of the translators: and probably, the rendering which will convey the best idea of his peculiar charm will be that which hits a happy medium between the literal and the paraphrastic. The translation of Francis, which long held a place as the English representative of this classic, is a poor performance, and is rapidly falling into merited oblivion. That of Wrangham is weak, colorless, and trivial. Of late years many versions have issued from the press, among which those of F. W. Newman, London, 1853; Melville, London, 1850; and Robinson, London, 1846–55; are chiefly remarkable. But a good English *Horace* is still a desideratum, and, if ever supplied, it will probably be the result of the combined labors of many hands.

ROBERT HALL.

ROBERT HALL, one of the most celebrated writers and preachers England has produced, was born at Arnsby, near Leicester, May 2, 1764. His father was the minister of the Baptist congregation in that place, and the author of several religious publications, one of which obtained considerable popularity. His character has been sketched by his more celebrated son, from whose testimony, as well as that of less partial witnesses, he appears to have been a man of no little ability and worth. Nor was Robert Hall less happy in his other parent — his mother being a woman of excellent sense and eminent piety. He lost her when he was but twelve years of age (1776); his father lived to rejoice in his son's dawning fame. He died in 1791.

Robert was the youngest of fourteen children. His infancy — like that of Newton, Locke, and Pascal, in whom the flame of life flickered as if it would go out almost as soon as kindled, while in the two last it but flickered all their days — was extremely sickly, and for some years there was hardly any hope of rearing him. As if to remind us how little we can anticipate the course of life, a full proportion of the great minds that have astonished and adorned the world, have come into it as if under sentence of immediately quitting it, with the worst possible promise of the great things they were destined to achieve.

Robert Hall's childhood was, as we shall presently see, unusually precocious — far more so than even that of most of the sons of genius; nor was the promise of the bright dawn, so often delusive, clouded as the day went on. It is said that he learned to talk and to read almost at the same time; his letters were assuredly learned in a strange school and from strange books, that is, in a graveyard, and from tombstones. The graveyard was adjacent to his father's house, and thither his nurse used to carry him for "air" and "exercise." Whether a cemetery be the best place for childhood to take its "airings" in, or epitaphs the best spelling-book, may be doubted; but it was at all events a singular introduction to literature.

Even at the dame's school, where he received his first formal instructions, he betrayed his passion for books, and was often found when school was over, in the above favorite but solemn "study" — the churchyard — engaged in solitary reading, though no longer poring over the tombstones. He pursued the same extra-official course of reading at his next school, which was kept by a Mr. Simmons, at a village four miles from Arnsby. He used to procure, it appears, from his father's library, books for these play-hour readings, and, doubtless, got more from his self-prompted studies than from any of his regular lessons. But the *character* of this "select library for the young" may well surprise us, and, if the fact were not well authenticated, his choice of favorite authors would seem incredible. Jonathan Edwards's *Treatise on the Freedom of the Will*, and Butler's *Analogy*, were, it seems, among the amusing "solatia" of his leisure hours; and Dr. Gregory assures us that it is "an ascertained fact," that when he was about nine or ten, he had read and re-read these works with "an intense interest." Before he was ten, another incident evinced the tendencies of his mind to literature; he had composed, it seems, many little essays, and

often "invited his brother and sisters to hear him preach." Similarly, when he was once disposing in imagination (as children sometimes will) of his father's "goods and chattels" before the worthy man's death, he willingly agreed that his brother should have "the cows, sheep, and pigs," but "all the *books*" were to come to *him*.

His early promise of eloquence, conjoined with religious sensibility, seemed to point to the sacred office; and, in fact, his father indulged at a very early period some anticipations that the pulpit was his destination. At eleven he was removed to a school at Kettering, where the same brilliant talents were evinced, but not very wisely developed. His master, flattered by having such a prodigy, sometimes invited him to display his precocious powers of *oratory* before a "select audience," — a folly which the sound judgment of Robert Hall loudly and justly condemned in after-life. From this school he was removed to another of greater note at Northampton, kept by the Rev. John Ryland, a man of eccentric, but like many others of the same family, of unusually vigorous intellect. The energy of Mr. Ryland's character, and his original and impressive modes of teaching, seem to have given him a remarkable ascendency over the minds of his pupils, — and there can be no doubt that Robert Hall's intellect was greatly and healthfully stimulated under his judicious training. Here he remained about a year and a half, and then, having decidedly expressed his predilections for the ministry, and pursued some preparatory theological studies under his father's roof, he repaired to the Baptist Academy at Bristol. This was in 1778, when only in his fifteenth year.

During his stay at Bristol, he seems to have made rapid progress in all the studies which constituted the academic curriculum. His attention to the principles and practice of composition was very marked; though, as Dr. Gregory

observes, the few remains of his juvenile compositions exhibit "more of the tumultuary flourish of the orator than he would have approved after his twentieth year." This is a common case; for a severe taste is, even in the highest genius, of slow growth, though in Robert Hall's perhaps as rapid as it ever was in any man.

His *debut* as a public speaker gave but little promise of the brilliant career which awaited him. On being appointed to deliver an address (as the students were accustomed to do in rotation) at the vestry of Broadmead Chapel, he, after a brief but fluent exordium which excited the expectations of his auditors, suddenly, but completely lost his self-possession, and covering his face in an agony of shame exclaimed, "Oh! I have lost all my ideas." His tutor, confident (as Sheridan said after his own ignominious first appearance) that it was *in* him, and determined, as was Sheridan, that it should come *out* of him, appointed him to deliver the *same* address the following week; not very judiciously, perhaps, considering the laws of association, and how apt is a sensitive mind, like a spirited horse, to *shy* and falter at the same spot. Sad to say, he again failed, and failed completely. Yet the incident was of value to him. While there was little fear lest a transient mortification like this should permanently depress a powerful mind, fully conscious of its powers, — indeed, such minds are generally stimulated rather than depressed by obstacles, — it had a salutary effect upon his moral nature.

In relation to the sacred office he seems at this time, as Dr. Gregory observes, to have been too little sensible of its higher purposes, and too ambitious of achieving intellectual eminence; perhaps also too conscious of his powers to achieve it. Some feeling of this kind is indicated by his own words, uttered after his *second* failure, — "If *this* does not humble me, the devil must have me!" Many other young orators who have afterwards attained eminence, have

encountered similar disasters in their first attempts. The singularity in Robert Hall's case is that he had not been hardened to self-possession by his previous juvenile appearance before those "select audiences," which his injudicious schoolmaster had so early taught the young Roscius to confront.

In the autumn of 1781, after staying three years at the Academy, he went, as an exhibitioner under Dr. Ward's will, to King's College, Aberdeen, where he remained till 1785. Several of the professors were men of note, especially Gerard and Leslie, while Marischal College could boast of the prelections of Campbell and Beattie. Hall pursued his studies in the departments of classics, philosophy, and mathematics, with like distinguished success; being the first man of his year in all the classes. But the great charm of his residence at Aberdeen was the society of Mackintosh, who, though a year younger, had entered college a year earlier. The friendship which ensued, and which only death dissolved, was equally beneficial to both parties. With some points of dissimilarity there were more of resemblance. The instant regards of Mackintosh, according to his own statement to Dr. Gregory, were strongly attracted by Hall's ingenuous frankness of countenance, the mingled vivacity and sincerity of his manner, and the obvious signs of great intellectual vigor. He says he first became attached to Hall "because he could not help it." But daily intercourse, in which they studied together without rivalry, and incessantly disputed without anger, — a true test of genuine attachment, — cemented their first casual predilections into a lasting friendship. "After having sharpened their weapons by reading, they often repaired to the spacious sands upon the sea-shore, and still more frequently to the picturesque scenery on the banks of the Don, above the old town, to discuss with eagerness the various subjects to which their attention had been directed. There was scarcely an important position in Berkley's *Minute Philosopher*, in Butler's

Analogy, or in Edwards *On the Will*, over which they had not thus debated with the utmost intensity. Night after night, nay, month after month for two sessions, they met only to study or to dispute, yet no unkindly feeling ensued. The process seemed rather — like blows in that of welding iron — to knit them closer together." [1] Though they both, doubtless, often fought for victory, they yet always thought at the time that it was for truth; and as Sir James strikingly said: "Never, so far as he could then judge, did either make a voluntary sacrifice of truth, or stoop to draw to and fro the *serra λογομαχίας* as is too often the case with ordinary controvertists." From these "discussions, and from subsequent meditation upon them," Sir James declared that he had "learned more *as to principles* than from all the books he ever read." In addition to their discussions over Berkley, Edwards, Butler, and other philosophers, they read large portions of the best Greek authors together — especially Plato. Such complete intercommunion of minds in the same studies — such mutual reflection of lights and constant collision of argument — must have been of incalculable benefit to both. By this sort of student-partnership, when, as in this case, minds are congenial, the results of reading may be more than doubled. During the last years of Hall's academic course, his friend was no longer at college, and his mind sought no "new mate." He spent the time in solitary study, and, as appears by his own confession, was much engaged in devotion and religious meditation. He took his degree of A. M. in 1785.

The six months' vacation of the two last sessions at Aberdeen had been spent in assisting Dr. Evans at Broadmead Chapel, Bristol. He now formally entered on the office of assistant-preacher, and about the same time was appointed to the classical tutorship in the Bristol Academy. This office,

[1] Gregory's *Memoir*, p. 15.

assumed at the early age of twenty-one, he discharged with great credit to himself and benefit to his pupils for more than five years.

Of his preaching at this early period, an interesting account is given by Dr. Gregory, to which we can only refer the reader. His favorite model for a short time was the original but eccentric Robinson of Cambridge, and, fascinated with his manner, he resolved, not very judiciously, to imitate it. One so original was little fitted to be an *imitator* of anybody, and his good sense soon reclaimed him from his error. The account he gave to Dr. Gregory of the mode in which he was cured of this folly is characteristic. "I was," he says, "too proud to *remain* an imitator. After my second trial, as I was walking home, I heard one of the congregation say to another, 'Really Mr. Hall *did remind* us of Mr. Robinson!' That, sir, was a knock down blow to my vanity; and I at once resolved that if ever I *did* acquire reputation it should be my own reputation, belong to my own character, and not be that of a *likeness*. Besides, sir, if I had not been a foolish young man, I should have seen how ridiculous it was to imitate such a preacher as Mr. Robinson. He had a musical voice, and was master of all its intonations. He had wonderful self-possession, and could say *what* he pleased, *when* he pleased, and *how* he pleased; while my voice and manner were naturally bad; and, far from having self-command, I never entered the pulpit without omitting to say something that I wished to say, and saying something that I wished unsaid; and, beside all this, I ought to have known that for me *to speak slow was ruin*. 'Why so?' 'I wonder that you, a student of philosophy, should ask such a question. You know, sir, that force or momentum is conjointly as the body and velocity; therefore, as my voice is feeble, what is wanted in body must be made up in velocity, or there will not be, cannot be, any impression.'"

It seems that he some time afterwards met Robinson in

London, and young as he was, opposed in a public company some of the heresies which Robinson had then embraced. This he did so successfully that the latter, provoked out of his temper and good breeding, spoke with disdain of "juvenile defenders of the faith." Hall was tempted to reply that "if *he* ever rode into the field of controversy he would at least not borrow Dr. Abbadie's boots," — a sarcasm in which there was a double sting, inasmuch as Robinson had at this time abandoned the very views which he had once "borrowed" Abbadie's arguments to defend.

An unhappy misunderstanding with his colleague in 1789, and which threatened the peace of the church at Broadmead, led to Hall's leaving Bristol. Before the close of his connection with that congregation, suspicions of heterodoxy on some points had been excited; and in reply to certain inquiries he gave a frank and explicit statement of his views. To one or two singularities of opinion, which he afterwards abandoned, he pleaded guilty. He avows he was at this time a "materialist," but declares that his sentiments did not affect his *theology*, and that he wished his materialism "to be considered a mere metaphysical speculation." It may be observed that in the same document, in which he fully avows his belief in the divinity of Christ, he makes no mention of his belief in the *personality* of the Holy Spirit — a doctrine of which at this time he was not convinced. His *materialism* he altogether abandoned in 1790; to the ordinary Trinitarian views he did not give his unqualified adhesion till some years later (1800).

From Bristol Mr. Hall went (1790) to Cambridge, to the congregation over which Robinson formerly presided. After a twelve-month's trial of the place, he was invited to the pastorate, and accepted it. As no small portion of the congregation had been in various degrees infected with the errors of their former minister, it has been well conjectured by Dr. Gregory that the very immaturity of Hall's senti-

ments on certain points was an advantage rather than otherwise. They listened to him when they would not have listened to a man of more strongly marked orthodoxy. As Hall gradually approximated to the sentiments generally held by his co-religionists, he led his congregation with him; and at length, by the force of his preaching, the influence of his splendid reputation, and the still better influence of his persuasive life and character, overcame all opposition to his ministry, and thoroughly weeded out the errors that had infested his flock.

In 1793 he published his celebrated *Apology for the Freedom of the Press.* The account of its origin is amusing. It seems that on this occasion he was "importuned into controversy," which, in spite of his unrivalled polemical powers, he ever avoided if possible. "And so, in an evil hour," says he, "I yielded. I went home to my lodgings and began to write immediately; sat up all night; and, wonderful for me, kept up the intellectual ferment for almost a month; and then the thing was done. I revised it a little as it went through the press, but I have ever since regretted that I wrote so hastily and superficially upon some subjects brought forward, which required touching with a masterhand, and exploring to their very foundations." The estimate he formed of the production was, it must be confessed, sufficiently modest; for, as an exhibition of intellectual vigor, it is certainly equal to almost any thing he ever produced. It may be conjectured, indeed, from the more cautious political tone of his later publications, and the far different terms in which, like his friend Sir James, he learned to speak of the French Revolution, that, had he written at a later period, he would have modified some of his statements, though he always declared his adhesion to the "essential principles" asserted. The reasons he assigns in the above extract, but, still more, his ingenuously expressed regret for the "asperities" in which he had occasionally indulged in

this piece, would not permit him in his later years to consent to its republication, till the booksellers left him no alternative. An earlier tract, entitled *Christianity Consistent with the Love of Freedom*, was impudently pirated, on paper which bore the *watermark* of 1818, with a title-page which bore the year 1791! It was, as Dr. Gregory says, "a very skilful imitation in paper, type, and date."

An anecdote here may be worth relating, as showing how completely at this time he had resiled from Socinianism, into which it had been once suspected he was fast lapsing. His spirited eulogium on Dr. Priestley rekindled the hopes of some of that gentleman's partisans, and rendered on some occasions Mr. Hall's "denial" of any of the imputed tendencies "imperative." "On one of these occasions," says Dr. Gregory, "Mr. Hall having in his usual terms panegyrized Dr. Priestley, a gentleman who held the doctor's theological opinions, tapping Mr. Hall upon the shoulder, said, 'Oh! sir, we shall have *you* among us soon I see.' Mr. Hall, startled and offended by the rude tone of exultation in which this was uttered, hastily replied, '*Me* amongst *you*, sir! *Me* amongst *you!* Why, if that were the case, I should deserve to be tied to the tail of the great red dragon, and whipped round the nethermost regions to all eternity.'"

In 1801 appeared one of the most eloquent and original of all his productions — the sermon on *Modern Infidelity*. A curious account of its preparation for the press is given by Dr. Gregory. Like most of Hall's sermons, it was delivered almost entirely unwritten, though the matter, of course, had been profoundly meditated. The torture to which composition exposed him from the mysterious disease in his back, quite indisposed the preacher to undertake the labor of preparing the sermon for the press. It was therefore procured in fragments from his dictation as he lay on the floor (a few paragraphs or pages at a time), and passed through the press, as his biographer assures us, without the author's having

seen a line of it. Of its merits it is superfluous to speak; as a luminous defence of some of the first principles of all religion, and a philosophical *exposé* of the anti-social tendencies of infidelity, it has never been surpassed. It raised Hall's reputation to the highest pitch; excited the admiration of men of all ranks and opinions; conciliated the esteem of those who had been offended with the *Apology;* crowded his chapel with throngs of university students; and, perhaps a still better proof of its success, exposed him to the rabid attacks of Atheism and its champions.

Two other discourses of surpassing excellence appeared in the course of the great struggle with France. One was entitled *Reflections on War*, preached on occasion of the "general thanksgiving" at the transient peace of Amiens, (1802). This, as Dr. Gregory surmises, was the only sermon Hall ever delivered *memoriter*, and the embarrassment he felt in some passages was sufficient to prevent him from ever repeating the attempt. The other was delivered on the renewal of the war (1803), and was entitled, *Sentiments proper to the present Crisis.* In spite of one or two rhetorical flights, scarcely admissible in a Christian pulpit, it is deservedly considered one of the most extraordinary effusions of his eloquence.

During the latter years of his residence at Cambridge this powerful and brilliant mind was more than once transiently eclipsed. These accesses of mental disease were doubtless attributable to many causes; partly to solitude, partly to excessive study, partly to the severe and harassing suffering in his back and the sleepless nights which it occasioned, partly to severe disappointment, but principally, no doubt, to that which exacerbated all other causes of mischief — the exquisitely strung and sensitive mind which is too often, as Dryden long ago observed,

> ——— "to madness near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

Just before his first attack (Nov. 1804), his severe sufferings from his old complaint induced his medical advisers to recommend his living a few miles from Cambridge, and using horse exercise. Equestrian exercise would seem a questionable remedy, considering the local symptoms of his mysterious disease, though country air might doubtless be beneficial. But whatever advantage this might secure was more than counterbalanced, it is to be feared, by the solitude to which his secluded residence doomed him, and which probably much contributed to his mental attack. The retreat chosen for him was at Shelford, four miles from Cambridge. There he was engaged in solitary study and meditation during the whole day, and often deep into the night. The first melancholy attack took place in November, 1804.

To the delight of his congregation, who had proved, by their provident care of him, their attachment to his ministry, he was able to resume his public functions in April, 1805. As it was feared that the associations of Shelford might prove prejudicial, he was recommended to change his residence, and most injudiciously, as it seems to us, he was again advised to reside in a remote village. He took a house at Foulmire, nine miles from Cambridge. Solitude once more proved his bane, and another attack soon supervened. After a year spent under judicious medical care at Bristol, he recovered sufficiently to engage in occasional village preaching, and to apply moderately to study. But it was thought prudent that he should quit Cambridge altogether, and he accordingly sent in his resignation.

Mr. Hall spent about fifteen years at Cambridge. Of his residence there — his studies, his modes of preparation for the pulpit, his social habits — an interesting account will be found in Dr. Gregory's *Memoir*, to which only a reference can here be made. His biographer naturally dwells with partial minuteness on this period of Hall's history, as that in which he became intimate with him, and enjoyed

unrestricted daily intercourse. It was that period, also, in which Mr. Hall achieved his great public reputation, and produced his most brilliant, if not his most useful, publications.

Leicester was the next scene of Hall's labors, whither he removed in the year 1806, and where he resided nearly twenty years, longer by some years than at any other place. In the limits of this brief article there is no space for details, nor is it necessary. He lived as retired as his reputation would allow him to be. If fame came, it came unsought; if the world intruded upon him, as it often did, and often inconveniently, he gave it a courteous welcome, but was still better pleased when it left him to his studies and his flock. But much as he loved privacy, privacy for him was no longer solitude; in 1808, after a somewhat singular courtship, he married, and, as it turned out, most happily.

This event largely contributed to his welfare; and it is observable that no symptoms of mental disease afterwards appeared. In relation to what he himself would consider the *great* purpose of his life, — the successful prosecution of his ministry, — the years spent at Leicester were the best of his life. However obscure might seem his lot, it was yet most happy; for he was eminently useful, and universally beloved. His chapel was twice enlarged to accommodate the increasing crowds who thronged to hear him. Occupying a central spot in the kingdom, he was frequently importuned to preach, on public occasions, in all directions of the compass; and, so far as his incessant and painful maladies permitted, he complied with such requests ungrudgingly. From time to time, and quite as frequently as the same physical infirmities allowed, he also gave the public the benefit of his pen. Besides several reviews, tracts, and other pieces, he published, during his residence at Leicester, some of his most celebrated sermons; two of

them — on the *Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister*, and on the lamented *Death of the Princess Charlotte* — are among the most striking efforts of his eloquence. He here also published the largest, and in some respects most valuable of his writings — those on the *Terms of Communion*. These treatises are equally distinguished by acuteness of logic and catholicity of sentiment. It has been sometimes lamented that he should not have given his consummate logical powers a more ample theme. But, in fact, his genius has made the theme ampler than it seems. Not only have these pieces exerted a wide influence in liberalizing the opinions and practice of his own denomination, but they abound in reasoning and sentiments of practical application to every church in Christendom, and cannot be read by any thoughtful Christian without making him feel something of that noble expansion of soul which animated their author; without making him sigh for the day, when "every middle wall of partition" which jealous bigotry has interposed to the intercommunion of those who reciprocally acknowledge each other to be Christians, may be "broken down."

On Dr. Ryland's death (1825), Mr. Hall was invited to Bristol, and, after a severe struggle, consented. It is scarcely a figure to say that he tore himself away from his congregation at Leicester. On the last occasion of celebrating the Lord's Supper, he sat down, overcome with his emotions, and, covering his face with his hands, "wept aloud." To see the "strong man thus bowed," dissolved the people also in tears, — and so they parted; his flock, as the Ephesian elders from Paul, "sorrowing most of all for the words that he spake, that they should see his face no more."

Mr. Hall was in his sixty-second year when he removed to Bristol, and it was his last change; thus terminating his labors where he began them. He was fast approaching the

close of his career. The mysterious and intractable malady which had so long tormented him, which had rendered his days and nights so "wearisome," became more urgent, and doses of opium almost fabulous produced little effect. The indirect effects of his complaint, — forbidding exercise, inducing plethora, and impeding the circulation, — produced that diseased condition of the heart which was the immediate cause of his death. The close of his life was a scene of frightful tortures, the sum of which, added to the almost constant pain in which his life was passed, must have been tantamount to many martyrdoms. The pages in Dr. Gregory's *Life* which depict his last sufferings, and the triumph of patience over them, form some of the most sorrowful, and yet also some of the brightest, in the records of Christian biography. Deep were the clouds which gathered round his sunset, but they were all penetrated and transfigured by the glory of the descending luminary; and even he who doubts whether Christianity be true, can surely hardly read the closing scenes of this great and good man's life without feeling, that since humanity is thus subject to suffering, it is much to have such consolations. His death took place February 21, 1831. After detailing the appearances presented by the *post mortem* examination, the eminent physician, Dr. Richard, adds, — "*Probably no man ever went through more physical suffering than Mr. Hall;* he was a fine example of the triumph of the higher powers of mind, exalted by religion, over the infirmities of the body. His loss will long be felt in this place, not only by persons of his own communion, but by all that have any esteem for what is truly great and good."

The mind of Robert Hall was of that select order which are equally distinguished by power and symmetry; where each single faculty is of imposing dimensions, yet none out of proportion to the rest. His intellect was eminently acute and comprehensive; his imagination prompt, vivid, and

affluent. This latter faculty, indeed, was not so exuberant (as Foster justly remarks) as that of a Burke or a Jeremy Taylor; nor could it have been so, without marring the harmony just mentioned. His reasoning was close as that of almost any controvertist of any age, but expressed in all the charms of a most chaste and polished style; — severe logic clothed in the most tasteful rhetoric. His talents for the successful prosecution of abstract science, — especially metaphysical and ethical — were of a very high order; but they were conjoined with strong practical sense, keen powers of observation, and a vivid sensibility. His memory was tenacious, and his aptitudes for the acquisition of knowledge, generally, far beyond the ordinary measure; but in him as in all very vigorous minds, diversified knowledge was but the material and aliment of original thought, and was subordinated to that wisdom which insists that it shall be the handmaid, not the mistress of intellect. His sense of the beautiful and the ludicrous seemed nearly equally vivid; and graceful imagery and pointed wit animated alike his writings and his conversation. His style is the very impress of all this amplitude and variety of endowments. It is masculine and compact, for a robust logic and strong sense form the basis of it; energetic and vivacious, for it is animated by imagination and sensibility; polished and elegant, for taste, exquisite, sometimes even to a morbid fastidiousness, presided over it.

On the whole, minds of greater powers in several given directions, or of more absolute originality in some one, may be readily pointed out; some too more strongly characterized either by rugged strength or imaginative exuberance; but seldom indeed has a mind appeared so variously dowered with all the choicest gifts of strength and grace in happy unison.

It has been well said of his style by a critic in the *Quarterly Review*, that it is "constructed after no model; it is

more massive than Addison's, more easy and unconstrained than Johnson's, more sober than Burke's." This is, in fact, one of its surpassing excellences; it is eminently beautiful, but for that reason has no predominant features; it is the just image of the happy conjunction and equilibrium of the author's powers; — music in which no excess in any of the parts mars the harmony.

If his more elaborate productions have a fault at all, it is the result of that very sensitiveness of taste to which reference has been made. In polishing to an extreme of fastidious elegance, he has perhaps here and there pared away a little of the energy of his style. For this reason it has even been conjectured that some of his strictly extemporaneous effusions, — extemporaneous as to the *language*, — to which he gave utterance in the all but preternatural dilation of mind, which sometimes characterized his eloquence in its prime, transcended in force and beauty his most deliberate compositions, produced as these always were amidst bodily sufferings little favorable to the free action of his faculties. In truth, his extemporaneous command of all the resources of language (equally seen in the pulpit and in conversation) was one of his most extraordinary endowments, and perhaps to the degree in which he possessed it, almost unique. Some may have been as copious in their diction, others as precise; but he conjoined both excellences in equal measure, and added to them, what is more rare, an astonishing command of *construction;* so that he could throw the rapid and soluble words, which seemed to come at will, into the most apt and elegant collocations.

This singular gift of extemporaneous speech put the copestone on all his other excellences as an orator. The general structure of his mind, his robust reasoning faculties, his vigorous though ever ministering imagination, his keen sensibility, and his vehement passions, pointed in the same direction, and fitted him to be a great public speaker. Such

he would have become under any circumstances; but it was his rare gift of extemporaneous language which enabled him to combine the immense advantage of unwritten composition with a freedom from all its usual defects; to clothe, not extemporaneous thoughts indeed, — on which no man should reckon, though after careful preparation such thoughts may come unbidden, — but carefully meditated matters, in all the graces of the most eloquent language. His usual mode of preparation for the pulpit is thus described by Dr. Gregory: — "The grand divisions of thought — the heads of a sermon for example — he would trace out with the most prominent lines of demarcation; and these, for some years, supplied all the hints that he needed in the pulpit, except on extraordinary occasions. To these grand divisions he referred, and upon them suspended all the subordinate trains of thought. The latter, again, appear to have been of two classes, altogether distinct; outline trains of thought, and trains into which much of the detail was interwoven. In the outline train the whole plan was carried out and completed as to the argument; in that of detail the illustrations, images, and subordinate proofs were selected and classified; and in those instances where the force of an argument or the probable success of a general application would mainly depend upon the language, even that was selected and appropriated, sometimes to the precise collocation of the words. Of some sermons, no portions whatever were wrought out thus minutely; the language employed in preaching being that which spontaneously occurred at the time; of others, this minute attention was paid to the verbal structure of nearly half; of a few, the entire train of preparation, almost from the beginning to the end, extended to the very sentences. Yet the marked peculiarity consisted in this, that the process, even when thus directed to minutiæ in his more elaborate efforts, did not require the use of the pen, at least at the time to which these remarks principally apply."

So perfect was the form in which he could give expression to a train of thought, that (as already intimated) it may even be surmised that his spoken style often surpassed, in all the essential excellences of eloquence, that of the most admired and elaborate of his published discourses; the former having all the advantages of a more idiomatic diction and more colloquial construction, yet without the sacrifice of the precision and elegance which distinguish the latter. His frequent paroxysms of pain must at all events have tended continually to distract his mind, and diminished the glow of feeling when in the act of composition; and hence the extreme reluctance with which he undertook the task. On the other hand, under the excitement of public speaking, the consciousness of painful sensations was less vivid, and sometimes vanished, as appears from one of his own curious but most sad confessions. He tells us that he did not know that he was ever perfectly free from the consciousness of distressing sensations in his back, except now and then *for a few moments in the pulpit.*

The same felicities of extemporaneous speech which marked his pulpit efforts were observable in private. His conversation possessed a vivacity, affluence, and elegance very rarely equalled. His repartees were particularly happy, and, as has been well remarked, strongly remind one of the manner of Johnson. Some of the pungent sayings, full of mingled wit and wisdom, which Dr. Gregory has recorded, make one regret that some Boswell was not always at hand to preserve those brilliant but evanescent effusions of his genius.

Many have lamented that he did so little (compared with some other men) by his pen. In truth, however, considering his constant sufferings and the dreadful toil which composition imposed upon him, his six octavos entitled him to be considered even a *voluminous* writer.

Though, like most other men of powerful minds, he was

fonder of thinking than reading, his acquisitions were various, and, in several branches of study, profound. It may be added that his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge followed him to the last, of which Dr. Gregory gives us a singular example. He says that he found him one morning, in the closing years of his life, lying on the floor with an Italian grammar and dictionary, deep in the study of that language. To this he had been stimulated by an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, in which an elaborate parallel had been instituted between the genius of Dante and that of Milton. With this critique he had been, he said, much delighted, and wished to judge for himself of the accuracy of the views propounded. Among the many triumphs achieved by Mr. Macaulay's genius, it may be doubted whether any was ever more signal than that nearly his first *Essay* induced a mind like that of Robert Hall to study a new language at the age of threescore, just to verify the justice of the criticisms.

It has been justly remarked by Mr. Foster, in his admirable critique on Robert Hall as a "preacher" (well worthy of universal perusal), that his eloquence in later years lost somewhat of the fire which characterized the oratory of his youth and manhood. But what was lost in this respect was gained in tenderness and pathos, in elevation of Christian sentiment and depth of Christian feeling.

It is the crowning glory of Robert Hall that all his great powers were consecrated to the noblest purposes; subordinated to objects better worth living for than intellectual power or intellectual fame. His sacred ambition was for the formation, in himself and others, of the Christian character. To moral self-culture he sought, as all ought to do, but so few really do, to consecrate every endowment of his intellect. Of the possession of high powers he could not but be conscious; and of the temptations they involved he was also profoundly sensible. His life shows

us that he had learned how to make them keep their place. Naturally impetuous, impatient, choleric, he sedulously watched over these infirmities in temper, and became remarkable for humility and simplicity; full of ambition, he submitted to cast down "every proud imagination;" in his youth fiery and pugnacious, he learned in his later years to hate controversy, and exercised in an eminent degree that charity toward all good men of all parties, which made him say in one of his sermons, "He who is good enough for Christ is good enough for me." In his manners he was as unsophisticated as a child, and in his conduct full of generosity and benevolence. His patience and fortitude were eminently displayed in the uncomplaining endurance of those frightful sufferings which made his life a perpetual martyrdom; while his faith and humility were evinced no less in his admission that none of these pangs could have been spared. It has been well said by a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, "It is impossible to read the works of this extraordinary man without perceiving that his passions in his youth were turbulent in the extreme — that the energies of his mind were then scarcely under his own control — that years of reflection and dear bought experience were wanting to him, above all men, in order to tame his spirit — that, like Milton's lion, he was a long time before he could struggle out of earth." "I presume," says he, in one of his letters, "the Lord sees I require more hammering and hewing than almost any other stone that was ever selected for his spiritual building, and that is the secret of his dealing with me." In a word, he exhibited the traits of a genuine Christian — his character shining with a more lustrous light as he advanced in years, "growing brighter and brighter to the perfect day."

The character to which he chiefly aspired himself, he was equally anxious to aid in forming in his fellow men, and to

this consecrated his genius as an object well worthy of it. Hence his contentment with a lot far more obscure than he could easily have attained in any department of secular life; and hence, with Paul, he accounted it his chief glory to be a "Christian minister."

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

Sir John Franklin, Rear-Admiral of the Blue, was a native of Spilsby, in Lincolnshire. Sprung from a line of freeholders, or "Franklins," his father inherited a small family estate, which was so deeply mortgaged by his immediate predecessor that it was found necessary to sell it; but by his success in commercial pursuits he was enabled to maintain and educate a family of twelve children, of whom one only died in infancy. The fortunes of his four sons were remarkable, unaided as they were by patronage or great connections. Thomas, the eldest, following the pursuits of his father, acquired the local reputation of an acute and highly honorable man of business, whose intellect gave him much influence with his neighbors, and in a time of threatened invasion, he was mainly instrumental in raising a body of yeomanry cavalry, in which he did the duty of adjutant, and was afterwards chosen to be lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of volunteer infantry. The second son, Sir Willingham, educated at Westminster, was elected to a scholarship of Christ's Church, Oxford, and after gaining an Oriel fellowship, was called to the bar, and died a judge at Madras. James, the third son, having, as cadet, exhibited great proficiency in Hindostanee and Persian, was presented by the India Company with a handsome sword, £50 in money, and a cornetcy in the First Bengal Native Cavalry,

in which he rose to the rank of major. He was noted while in India for his scientific knowledge, which procured him a lucrative civil appointment, but his advancement was interrupted by ill health, and after executing extensive surveys of the country, he was under the necessity of returning to England, where he died. His collections in natural history were highly appreciated by zoölogists.

John, the youngest son, and subject of this memoir, was destined for the church by his father, who with this view, had purchased an advowson for him. He received the first rudiments of his education at St. Ives, and afterwards went to the Lowth Grammar-School, where he remained two years; but while having employed a holiday in walking twelve miles with a companion to look at the sea, which up to that time he knew only by description, his imagination was so impressed with the grandeur of the scene that former predilections for a sea life were confirmed, and he determined from thenceforth to be a sailor. In hopes of dispelling what he considered to be a boyish fancy, his father sent him on a trial voyage to Lisbon in a merchantman, but finding on his return that his wishes were unchanged, procured him, in the year 1800, an entry on the quarter-deck of the Polyphemus, 74, Captain Lawford; and this ship having led the line in the battle of Copenhagen in 1801, young Franklin had the honor of serving in Nelson's hardest fought action. Having left school at the early age of thirteen, his classical attainments were necessarily small, and at that period there was no opportunity on board a ship of war, of remedying the defect. Two months, however, after the action of Copenhagen, he joined the Investigator discovery ship commanded by his relative, Captain Flinders, and under the training of that able scientific officer, while employed in exploring and mapping the coasts of Australia, he acquired a correctness of astronomical observation and a skill in surveying which proved of eminent utility in his future career. In the pros-

ecution of this service he gained for life the friendship of the celebrated Robert Brown, naturalist to the expedition.

In 1803 the Investigator having been condemned at Port Jackson as unfit for the prosecution of the voyage, Captain Flinders determined to return to England to solicit another ship for the completion of the survey, and Franklin embarked with him on board the Porpoise armed store-ship, Lieutenant-Commander Fowler. In the voyage homewards his ship and the Cato which accompanied her, were wrecked the night of the 18th of August, on a coral reef distant om Sandy Cape, on the main coast of Australia, six- hree leagues, and the crews, consisting of ninety-four persons, remained for fifty days on a narrow sand-bank, not more than 150 fathoms long, and rising only four feet above the water, until Captain Flinders having made a voyage to Port Jackson, of 250 leagues, in an open boat, along a savage coast, returned to their relief with a ship and two schooners.[1] After this misfortune Captain Flinders, as is well known, went to the Isle of France, where he was unjustly and ungenerously detained a prisoner by General de Caen, the governor. Meanwhile Franklin proceeded with Lieutenant Fowler to Canton, where he obtained a passage to England in the Earl Camden, East Indiaman, commanded by Sir Nathaniel Dance, commodore of the China fleet of sixteen sail.

On the 15th of February 1804, Captain Dance had the distinguished honor of repulsing a strong French squadron,

[1] The Bridgewater, another merchantman, was also in company with the Porpoise at the time of the wreck, and narrowly escaped sharing the same fate. The master of her, however, having on the following day seen the shipwrecked vessels from a distance, proceeded on his voyage to Bombay, where, on his arrival, he reported their loss. He did not live to explain his motives to those whom he thus deserted, for the Bridgewater never was heard of again after she left Bombay.

led by the redoubted Admiral Linois. Lieutenant Fowler assisted the commodore with his professional advice in this action, and Franklin performed the important duty of signal midshipman. On reaching England, Franklin joined the Bellerophon 74, and in that ship he was again intrusted with the signals, a duty which he executed with his accustomed coolness and intrepidity in the great battle of Trafalgar, while those stationed around him on the poop fell fast, and were all, with only four or five exceptions, either killed or wounded. In the Bedford, his next ship, he attained the rank of lieutenant, and remaining in her for some years, latterly as first lieutenant, served in the blockade of Flushing, on the coast of Portugal, and in other parts of the world, but chiefly on the Brazil station, whither the Bedford had gone as one of the convoy which conducted the royal family of Portugal to Rio de Janeiro in 1808. In the ill-managed and disastrous attack on New Orleans, he commanded the Bedford's boats in an engagement with the enemy's gunboats, one of which he boarded and captured, receiving a slight wound in the hand-to-hand fight.

On peace being established, Franklin turned his attention once more to the scientific branch of his profession, as affording scope for his talents, and having made his wishes known to Sir Joseph Banks, who was generally consulted by government on such matters, he set himself sedulously to refresh his knowledge of surveying. In 1818, the discovery of a north-west passage became again, after a long interval, a national object, principally through the suggestions and writings of Sir John Barrow, secretary of the Admiralty, and Lieutenant Franklin was appointed to the Trent, as second to Captain Buchan of the Dorothea, hired vessels equipped for penetrating to the north of Spitzbergen, and if possible, crossing to the Polar Sea by that route. During a heavy storm, both ships were forced to seek for safety by boring into the closely packed

ice, in which extremely hazardous operation the Dorothea was so much damaged that her reaching England became doubtful; but the Trent having sustained less injury, Franklin requested to be allowed to prosecute the voyage alone, or under Captain Buchan, who had the power of embarking in the Trent if he chose. The latter, however, declined to leave his officers and men at a time when the ship was almost in a sinking condition, and directed Franklin to onvey him to England. Though success did not attend his voyage, it brought Franklin into personal intercourse th the leading scientific men of London, and they were slow in ascertaining his peculiar fitness for the command of such an enterprise. His calmness in danger, promptness and fertility of resource, and excellent seamanship, as proved under the trying situation which cut short the late voyage, were borne ample testimony to by the official reports of his commanding officer; but to these characteristics of a British seaman, he added other qualities less common, more especially an ardent desire to promote science for its own sake, and not merely for the distinction which eminence in it confers, together with a love of truth which led him to do full justice to the merits of his subordinate officers, without wishing to claim their discoveries as a captain's right. Added to this, he had a cheerful buoyancy of mind, which, sustained by religious principle of a depth known only to his most intimate friends, was not depressed in the most gloomy times. It was, therefore, with full confidence in his ability and exertions that he was, in 1819, placed in command of an expedition appointed to travel through Rupert's land to the shores of the Arctic Sea; while Lieutenant Parry, who had in like manner risen from second officer under Sir John Ross to a chief command, was despatched with two vessels to Lancaster Sound, a mission attended with a success that spread his fame throughout the world. At this period, the northern coast of America was

known at two isolated points only, namely, the mouth of the Coppermine River, discovered by Hearne, but placed erroneously by him four degrees of latitude too much to the north; and the mouth of the Mackenzie, more correctly laid down by the very able traveller by whose name the river is now known. On the side of Behring's Straits, Cook had penetrated only to the Icy Cape, and on the Eastern coasts Captain (Sir John) Ross, in 1818, had ascertained the correctness of Baffin's survey, which had been questioned, and had looked into Lancaster Sound and reported it to be closed by an impassable mountain barrier. To stimulate enterprise by rewarding discoverers, the legislature established a scale of premiums, graduated by the degrees of longitude to which ships could penetrate, but no provision was made for a pecuniary recompense to any one who should trace out the north-west passage in boats or canoes.

Lieutenant Franklin, attended by a surgeon, two midshipmen, and a few Orkneymen, embarked for Hudson's Bay in June, 1819, on board of one of the company's ships, which ran ashore on Cape Resolution during a fog on the voyage out, and was saved from foundering by Franklin's nautical skill. On reaching the anchorage off York Factory, a large hole was found in the ship's bottom, but so far closed by a fragment of rock as considerably to diminish the influx of water. Franklin's instructions left the route he was to pursue much to his own judgment; in fact, so little was then known in England of the country through which he was to travel, even by the best informed members of the government, that no detailed direction could be given, and he was to be guided by the information he might be able to collect at York Factory from the Hudson Bay Company's servants there assembled. No time could be more unpropitious for a journey through that land. For some years an internecine warfare had been carried on between the North-West Company, operating from Canada, claiming a right to

the fur-trade from priority of discovery, and holding commissions as justices of peace from the colonial government, and the Hudson Bay Company, which, in virtue of a charter from King Charles the Second, attempted to maintain an exclusive authority over all the vast territory drained by the rivers that fall into the bay. Arrests by clashing warrants of the contending justices were frequent, might became right when the members of the two companies met, personal violence, seizure of property, and even assassination were too common, and in a recent fight at Red River twenty-two colonists of the Hudson Bay Company had lost their lives. Numbers also had perished of famine in the interior, owing to the contests that were carried on. When the expedition landed at York Factory, they found some of the leading North-West partners prisoners there, and learned that both companies were arming to the extent of their means for a decisive contest next summer. Such being the state of the country, a party coming out in a Hudson's Bay ship was looked upon with suspicion by the members of the rival company, and it was mainly through Franklin's prudent conduct and conciliating manners that it was permitted to proceed; but sufficient aid to insure its safety was not afforded by either of the contending bodies. Wintering the first year on the Saskatchewan, the expedition was fed by the Hudson Bay Company; the second winter was spent on the "barren grounds," the party subsisting on game and fish procured by their own exertions, or purchased from their native neighbors; and in the following summer the expedition descended the Coppermine River, and surveyed a considerable extent of the sea-coast to the eastward, still depending for food on the usual supplies of the chase, and often faring very scantily, or fasting altogether. The disasters attending the return over the barren grounds, on the premature approach of winter, have been told by Franklin himself in a narrative which excited

universal interest and commiseration. The loss of Mr. Hood, a young officer of very great promise, and who at the time of his death had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant, was especially deplored. The survivors of this expedition travelled from the outset at York Factory down to their return to it again, by land and water, 5,550 miles. While engaged on this service, Franklin was promoted to be a commander, and after his return to England in 1822, he obtained the post rank of captain, and was elected to be a fellow of the Royal Society. In the succeeding year he married Eleanor,[1] the youngest daughter of William Porden, Esquire, an eminent architect, by whom he had a daughter and only child, now the wife of the Rev. John Philip Gell.

In a second expedition, which left home in 1825, he descended the Mackenzie under more favorable auspices, peace having been established throughout the fur-countries under the exclusive government of the Hudson Bay Company, which had taken the North-West traders into partnership, and was then in a position to afford him effectual assistance, and speed him on his way in comfort. This time the coast line was traced through thirty-seven degrees of longitude from the mouth of the Coppermine River, where his former survey commenced, to nearly the 150th meridian, and approaching within 160 miles of the most easterly point attained by Captain Beechey, who was coöperating with him from Behring's Straits. His exertions were fully appreciated at home and abroad. He was knighted in 1829, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law from the University of Oxford, was adjudged the gold medal of the Geographical Society of Paris, and was elected in 1846, Correspondent of the Institute of France in the Academy of Sciences. Though the late surveys executed by him-

[1] She died in 1825.

self and by a detachment under command of Sir John Richardson comprised one, and within a few miles of two, of the spaces for which a parliamentary reward was offered, the Board of Longitude declined making the award, but a bill was soon afterwards laid before parliament by the secretary of the Admiralty abrogating the reward altogether, on the ground of the discoveries contemplated having been thus effected.[1] In 1828, he married his second wife, Jane, second daughter of John Griffin, Esq.

Sir John's next official employment was on the Mediterranean station, in command of the Rainbow, and his ship soon became proverbial in the squadron for the happiness and comfort of her officers and crew.[2] As an acknowledgment of the essential service he had rendered off Patras in the "war of liberation," he received the Cross of the Redeemer of Greece from King Otho, and after his return to England he was created Knight Commander of the Guelphic order of Hanover.

In 1836, Lord Glenelg offered Sir John the lieutenant-governorship of Antigua, and afterwards of Van Diemen's Land, or Tasmania, which latter he accepted with the condition that he might be allowed to resign it, if, on a war breaking out, he were tendered the command of a ship. He preferred rising in his own profession, to the emoluments of the civil service. In as far as a man of independent political principles, of strict honor and integrity, conspicuous for the

[1] Messrs. Dean and Simpson of the Hudson Bay Company, at a later period (1836–1839) completed the survey of 160 miles of coast line lying between the extreme points of Beechey and Franklin, and navigated the sea eastwards beyond the mouth of Back's Great Fish River, proving the existence of a continuous watercourse from Behring's Straits through 73° of longitude, as far eastward as the ninety-fourth meridian.

[2] The sailors, with their usual fondness for epithets, named the ship the "Celestial Rainbow" and "Franklin's Paradise."

benevolence of his character, without private interests to serve, and of a capacity which had been shown on several important commands, was likely to benefit the colony he was sent to govern, the choice was a judicious one, and did honor to Lord Glenelg's discernment. Dr. Arnold, no mean judge of character, rejoicing in the promise the appointment gave of a new era in the annals of colonial management, expressed the delight with which, had circumstances permitted, he would have labored with such a governor in founding a system of general education and religious instruction in that distant land. Sir John's government, which lasted till the end of 1843, was marked by several events of much interest. One of his most popular measures was the opening of the doors of the legislative council to the public, a practice soon afterwards followed by the older colony of New South Wales. He also originated a college, endowing it largely from his private funds with money and lands, in the hope that it would eventually prove the means of affording to all parties secular and religious instruction of the highest kind. At Sir John's request Dr. Arnold selected a favorite pupil, the Rev. John Philip Gell,[1] to take the direction of this institution; but much opposition to the fundamental plan of the college was made by various religious bodies, and after Sir John left the colony the exclusive management of it was vested in the Church of England, with free admission to the members of other persuasions. In his time also the colony of Victoria was founded by settlers from Tasmania; and towards its close, transportation to New South Wales having been abolished, the convicts from every part of the British empire were sent to Tasmania. Up to the period of his quitting the government this concentration had occasioned no material inconvenience, neither was there at that time

[1] In later years he became Sir John's son-in-law, as mentioned above.

any organized opposition to it. On an increase to the lieutenant-governor's salary being voted by the colonial legislature, Sir John declined to derive any advantage from it personally, while he secured the augmentation to his successor. In 1838 he founded a scientific society at Hobarton (now called the "Royal Society"). Its papers were printed at his expense, and its meetings were held in Government House. He had also the gratification of erecting in South Australia, with the aid of the governor of that colony, a handsome granite obelisk, dedicated and inscribed to the memory of his former commanding officer, Captain Flinders, to whose discoveries we owe our earliest knowledge of that part of the continent of Australia. It stands on a lofty hill, and serves as a landmark to sailors. A magnetic observatory, founded in 1840, at Hobarton, in connection with the head establishment under Colonel Sabine at Woolwich, was an object of constant personal interest to Sir John; and Tasmania being the appointed refitting station of several expeditions of discovery in the Antarctic regions, he enjoyed frequent opportunities of exercising the hospitality he delighted in, and of showing his ardor in promoting the interests of science whenever it lay in his power to do so. The lamented Dumont d'Urville commanded the French expedition, and Sir James Clark Ross the English one, consisting of the Erebus and Terror. The surveying vessels employed in those seas during that period came also in succession to Hobarton — namely, the Beagle, Captain Wickham; the Pelorus, Captain Harding; the Rattlesnake, Captain Owen Stanley; the Beagle (2d voyage), Captain Stokes; and the Fly, Captain Blackwood; all of whom, with the officers under them, received from the lieutenant-governor a brother sailor's welcome. Thus pleasantly occupied, the years allotted to a colonial governorship drew towards a close, and Sir John contemplated with no common satisfaction the advancing strides of the colony in material pros-

perity; but he was not destined to be spared one of those deep mortifications to which every one is exposed, however upright may be his conduct abroad, who is dependent for support and approval upon a chief at home that changes with every party revolution. When Sir John was sent to Tasmania, England had not yet recognized as an established fact that the inhabitants of a colony are better judges of their own interests, and more able to manage their own affairs, than bureaucracy in Downing Street, with a constantly shifting head, ill informed of the factious oligarchies that infest colonies, and of the ties that connect them with subordinate officials at home. Previous to leaving England, Sir John was advised, and indeed instructed, to consult the colonial secretary of Tasmania in all matters of public concern, as being a man of long experience, thoroughly acquainted with the affairs of the colony; and he found on taking charge of his government, that this was a correct character of the officer next to himself in authority. Mr. Montagu was a man eminently skilful in the management of official matters, but he was also the acknowledged head of a party in the colony bound together by family ties, and possessing great local influence from the important and lucrative situations held by its members, and the extensive operations of a bank of which they had the chief control. Party struggles ran high in the legislative council, and the lieutenant-governor's position was one of great delicacy, while the difficulty of his situation was vastly augmented through the practice of the officials in Downing street of encouraging private communications on public measures from subordinate officers of the colony, and weighing them with the despatches of the lieutenant-governor. For some years, by Sir John's prudent conduct, the harmony of the colonial executive was not interrupted; but at a later period the colonial secretary, having visited England, returned to Tasmania with greater pretensions, and commenced a course of independent action,

ever hostile to his chief, subversive of the harmonious co-operation heretofore existing, and thus injurious to the interests of the colony, so that Sir John was under the necessity of suspending this officer from his functions until the pleasure of Lord Stanley, then secretary of state for the colonies, was known. Mr. Montagu immediately proceeded to England to state his own case, and he did it with such effect that Lord Stanley, while admitting that the colonial secretary had acquired a local influence which rendered "his restoration to his office highly inexpedient,"[1] penned a despatch which is not unjustly characterized as a consummate piece of special pleading for Mr. Montagu, whom it absolves, while it comments on the lieutenant-governor's proceedings in a style exceedingly offensive to a high-minded officer who had acted, as he conceived, with the strictest regard to the public interests. The extraordinary measure was also resorted to of instantly furnishing Mr. Montagu, then in attendance at Downing street, with a copy of this despatch, so that he was enabled to transmit it to Hobarton, where it was exposed in the Bank to public inspection. At the same time there was circulated privately amongst the officers of the colonial government and others a journal of his transactions with the lieutenant-governor, and of his private communications with members of Franklin's family, which he had kept for years while on terms of close social intercourse with them. This volume having answered in England the purpose for which it was intended, was now exhibited in the colony as containing an account of the subjects in which he stated he had held conversations with Lord Stanley. All this took place before the lieutenant-governor received official information of Lord Stanley's decision. The recovery of a document which had lain

[1] Lord Stanley's despatch, September 13, 1842. Mr. Montagu was promoted to be colonial secretary at the Cape of Good Hope.

secluded in an office in the colony enabled Sir John afterwards more fully to substantiate one of the most important charges he had made; nevertheless Lord Stanley refused to modify the terms he had employed, or to make any concession calculated to soothe the wounded feeling of an honorable and zealous officer. The arrival of a new lieutenant governor, the late Sir John Eardley Wilmot, bringing with him the first notice of his own appointment, and consequently finding Sir John still in the colony, served to show more strongly than could otherwise have been done, the hold the latter had gained on the affections of the colonists, and the verdict pronounced on Lord Stanley's despatch by the people, to whom all the merits of the case were most fully known. Sir John, after three months' longer residence at Hobarton as a private individual, waiting for a passage to England, during which time he received addresses emanating from every district of the colony, was attended to the place of embarkation by the most numerous assemblage of all classes of people which had ever been seen on those shores, the recently consecrated Bishop of Tasmania[1] walking at their head, along with the new colonial secretary, the late Mr. Bicheno, who for some months had acted in the greatest harmony with Sir John. A local paper, after describing the scene in much detail, adds: "Thus departed from among us as true and upright a governor as ever the destinies of a British colony were intrusted to." Years afterwards, when the enthusiasm of party feelings could have no share in their proceedings, the colonists showed their remembrance of his virtues in a more substantial manner, as will be mentioned below. Sir John, on receiving the secretary of state's despatch, had tendered his resignation, but his successor was appointed before his letter could reach

[1] The erection of Tasmania into a see was promoted by Sir John's exertions and representations.

England, though, as we have just said, his recall despatch did not come to Tasmania till some days after Sir Eardley's arrival.

Owing to the fortunate rendezvous at Hobarton of the scientific expeditions and surveying ships above named, as well as many of her Majesty's vessels engaged in the ordinary service of those seas, the intrigues of the family faction and their supporters in the colony being matters of common discussion, became known to numbers of Sir John's brother officers, and a true estimate of the treatment he had received from the colonial minister was formed by the profession to which he belonged. He found, therefore, on reaching England, that the confidence of the Admiralty in his integrity and ability was undiminished, and this was speedily shown by his appointment in 1845 to the command of an expedition, consisting of the Erebus and Terror, fitted out for the further discovery of the north-west passage. With an experienced second in command, Captain Crozier, trained under Parry and James Ross from 1821 in the navigation of icy seas, a select body of officers chosen for their talent and energy, and excellent crews, in ships as strong as art could make them, and well furnished, Franklin sailed from England for the last time on the 26th of May, 1845. He was last seen by a whaler on the 26th of July, in Baffin's Bay, at which time the expedition was proceeding prosperously. Letters written by him a few days previously to that date were couched in language of cheerful anticipation of success, while those received from his officers expressed their admiration of the seamanlike qualities of their commander, and the happiness they had in serving under him. In the autumn of 1847, public anxiety began to be manifested for the safety of the discoverers, of whom nothing had been heard; and searching expedition after expedition despatched in quest of them in 1848, and the succeeding years down to 1854, regardless of cost or hazard, redound to the

lasting credit of England. In this pious undertaking Sir John's heroic wife took the lead. Her exertions were unwearied, she exhausted her private funds in sending out auxiliary vessels to quarters not comprised in the public search, and by her pathetic appeals she roused the sympathy of the whole civilized world. France sent her Bellot; the United States of America replied to her calls by manning two searching expeditions, the expenses of which were borne by Mr. Grennell, a wealthy private citizen of great humanity and liberality; and the inhabitants of Tasmania subscribed £1,700, which they transmitted to Lady Franklin, as their contribution towards the expense of the search. In August, 1850, traces of the missing ships were discovered, and it was ascertained that their first winter had been spent behind Beechey Island, where they had remained at least as late as April, 1846. Yet in spite of every exertion by the searching parties, no further tidings were obtained until the spring of 1854, when Dr. Rae, then conducting an exploring party of the Hudson Bay Company, learnt from the Esquimaux that in 1850, white men to the number of about forty, had been seen dragging a boat over the ice, near the north shore of King William's Island, and that later in the same season, but before the breaking up of the ice, the bodies of the whole party were found by the natives on a point lying at a short distance to the north-west of Back's Great Fish River, where they had perished from the united effects of cold and famine. These unfortunate men were identified as the remnant of the crews of the Erebus and Terror, by numerous articles which the Esquimaux had picked up at the place where they perished, many of which Dr. Rae purchased from that people and brought to England. Point Ogle is supposed by this gentleman to be the spot where the bodies lie; and this summer (1855) Mr. Anderson of the Hudson Bay Company, started from Great Slave Lake to examine the locality, pay the last tribute of respect to the dead,

and collect any written papers that might remain there, or books and journals said to be in the hands of the Esquimaux. By considering the direction in which the party that perished were travelling when seen by the natives, and the small district that remains unexplored, we must come to the conclusion that the ships were finally beset between the 70th and 72d parallels of latitude, and near the 100th meridian. Two entrances from the north may exist to this part of the sea, one along the west coast of North Somerset and Boothia, which is an almost certain one; and the other which is more conjectural, may occupy the short unexplored space between Captain Sherard Osborn's and Lieutenant Wynniatt's extreme points. To approach this last strait, if it actually exists, Cape Walker would be left on the eastern side of the passing ships. It is a singular and most melancholy fact, that the very limited district of the Arctic Sea thus indicated, and which was specially adverted to in the original plan of search, is almost the only spot that has defied the exertions of the skilful and persevering officers who have attempted to explore it. Sir James Ross failed in reaching it; it intervenes between the extremes of the long and laborious journeys made by Captain Sherard Osborn and Lieutenant Wynniatt. Dr. Rae's two attempts to enter it were frustrated by the state of the ice and other circumstances, and Captain Collinson was also stopped short on its southern side by the want of fuel. Lady Franklin had sent out the Prince Albert for the express purpose of searching this quarter, but Mr. Kennedy unfortunately, instead of adhering to the letter of instructions, trusted to a distant view of the passage from the north, which seemed to him to be closed, and turning to the west, made his memorable winter journey through a space, which, though he was ignorant of the fact at the time, had been previously examined.

With the utmost economy in its use, fuel would soon

become precious on board the Erebus and Terror; and it is probable that after three years one of the ships would be broken up to furnish this essential article. Provisions could not last longer without placing the crews on short allowance, and to do so in that climate, subjected them to sure and destructive attacks of scurvy. Fish and venison, it is true, might be procured in quantities sufficient to modify these conclusions, but not to a great extent: and, beyond all question, the numbers of the intrepid sailors who left England in such health and spirits in 1845, had waned sadly by the close of the season for operations in 1849. The forty men seen by the natives early in 1850, were doubtless the only survivors at that date. Franklin, had he lived till then, would have been sixty-four years old, but no one of that age was in the number seen by the natives. Had he been then in existence, he would have taken another route on the abandonment of his ship, as no one knows better than he the fatal result of an attempt to cross that wide expanse of frozen ground lying between the mouth of the Great Fish River and the far-distant Hudson Bay post on the south side of Great Slave Lake. Who can conjecture the reason that turned the steps of the weary wanderers in that direction? Perhaps the desire of solving the long-sought problem of a north-west passage, even then animated their emaciated frames, and it is certain that they did solve it, though none of them lived to claim the grateful applause of their countrymen. Later in point of time, and in a higher latitude, Sir Robert M'Clure also, filled up a narrow gap between previous discoveries, and so traced out the north-west passage by travelling over ice that has in the five several years in which it has been attempted, proved to be a barrier to ships. If ever in the pursuit of whales, or for conveyance of minerals, commercial enterprise endeavors to force a north-west passage by steam, the southern route, whose last link was forged by Franklin's party with their lives, will un-

doubtingly be chosen. And it is to be deeply regretted that the parliamentary committee in recommending the grant of public money to Sir Robert M'Clure, which his courage and enterprise so well deserved, should have omitted to mention the prior discovery made by the crews of the Erebus and Terror.[1]

This sketch of Sir John Franklin's character and public services has been written by one who served long under his command, who during upwards of twenty-five years of close intimacy had his entire confidence, and in times of great difficulty and distress, when all conventional disguise was out of the question, beheld his calmness and unaffected piety. If it has in some passages assumed the appearance of eulogy, it has done so not for the purpose of unduly exalting its subject, but from a firm conviction of the truth of the statements. On the other hand, the writer has abstained, in the only sentences in which it was necessary to speak of opponents, from saying a single word more of their conduct or motives than strict justice to Franklin's memory demanded. Franklin himself was singularly devoid of any vindictive feeling. While he defended his own honor, he would have delighted in showing any kindness in his power to his bitterest foe; and in emulation of that spirit the preceding pages have been penned.

[1] Spars and pieces of rail recognized as having belonged to the Erebus and Terror were picked up by Captain Collinson near his wintering place in Cambridge Bay, and are sufficient evidence of current setting in that direction, through a passage incumbered doubtless with drift ice.

HOMER.

HOMER, the greatest epic poet of Greece, and a name of the highest significance, not with regard to Greece only, but to Europe generally, and to the history of the human race. For in Homer we have to do not merely with a poet of the first class, holding the same place in literature that Aristotle and Newton do in science, but with the oldest records, after the books of Moses, that have exercised a permanent influence on the civilization of the West. It is but reasonable, therefore, that we should give a more full and minute consideration to the Homeric poems, than even the high position of their author on the topmost peak of the Hellenic Parnassus would justify.

The life of Homer did not fall within the strictly historical epoch of Greek literature; nor were there any diligent biographers in his day who made it a business to collect and to make public the notable sayings and doings of men of extraordinary genius. The existing literary testimonies for the facts connected with the life of the poet, do not carry us further back than the age of Pindar (B. C. 500); that is to say, to a period more than three hundred years posterior to the age of the great poet, taken at the latest of the various dates to which it is assigned. What we know of Homer, therefore, we know only through the channel of national tradition, uncertain and vague as that must always be in an

...as either unknown or little practised, ... literary documents never dreamt of. We ...erefore, be surprised to hear that even the birth-... their great national poet was unknown to the Greeks, ... that the period in which he flourished was a puzzle to their ablest chronologers. We are not, however, to suppose that on this interesting subject we know absolutely nothing. However vague popular traditions may be, and however discrepant in minor details, they will generally be found to contain a nucleus of truth which a practised eye can readily distinguish from the fabulous accretions of idle or impudent imaginations; and if the general substance of such traditions regarding the life of a great poet, is not contradicted, or is rather confirmed, by the internal evidence of his reputed works, a reasonable man may take his stand upon them as confidently as he does upon any other conclusion, resting upon evidence which may reach the highest degree of probability, but can in no case partake of absolute scientific certainty.

The authorship of the *Lives* of Homer, printed in Barnes', and other editions, and in Westermann's collection,[1] is unknown; but their value as literary documents depends not on what the authors say in their own name, which is utterly worthless, but on the ancient authorities and special popular traditions which they quote. From them we know what was the account given by Aristotle of the birthplace of Homer, what Ephorus said was the local tradition of the people of Cumæ, and what Homeric monuments were shown by the islanders of Ios. A very slight consideration of these ancient testimonies thus analyzed will suffice to show the vanity of the claims put forth by various Greek cities as having given birth to Homer. Of these seven is the number commonly mentioned in a well-known distich,[2] but

[1] Βιογράφοι, Brunswick, 1845. [2] Aul. Gell. iii., 11.

the reader who chooses to turn up Suidas will find at least half a dozen more; and to increase learning in this matter will only be to increase skepticism, unless a man carries with him the sound maxim of the lawyers, — *ponderanda sunt testimonia non numeranda.* The claims of Athens, for instance, rest, according to a distinct testimony,[1] on the mere fact that the Ionians of Smyrna were a colony from Attica, and that if Homer was a Smyrniote, he might reasonably be called an Athenian, just as a person born in Sydney may say he is a Londoner, because his father, or his grandfather, or his great-grandfather was so. In a similar loose fashion the claims of Salamis in Cyprus, are found to be explained by the fact that Stasinus, one of the poets of the *Epic Cycle*, was a native of that island, and that the epic poem called Cypria, written by him, was by some attributed to Homer, from whom Stasinus is said to have received it as a marriage gift with the daughter of the great poet.[2] Colophon, in a similar way, claimed to have produced the poet of the *Iliad*, because of a famous humorous poem called the Margites, of which Homer was generally supposed to be the author.[3] But the same critical inspection which enables us to expose the flimsy pretensions of these places, reveals the remarkable fact that those other cities which have most to say for themselves as being the native country of Homer, unite, by the peculiar form of their traditions, in giving to Smyrna at least some share in his birth, — a plain admission that at the time when these traditions were framed, the claims of Smyrna were considered so strong that they could not possibly be ignored. Thus the most detailed and best known *Life*, that attributed to Herodotus, which was for a long time received as authentic, deduces the parentage of Homer from Magnesia, in Thessaly; thence Melanopus is

[1] Lives δ and ε in Westermann.
[2] Ælian, V. H. ix., 15.
[3] Welcker, *Epic Cycle*, i., 184.

said to have crossed the Ægean, and settled in Cumæ, the principal city of the Æolians, in Asia Minor; here he married a lady of Cumæ, by whom he had a daughter called Critheis; and this maiden having, unknown to her guardians, formed a connection with some unknown individual of the male sex, was, to avoid exposure, sent to Smyrna, where, on the banks of the river Meles, she brought forth Homer, thence called Melesigenes. We have already said that such local traditions are not history; but when we find another of the seven cities, namely, Ios, framing a local legend, which, while differing from that of Cumæ in every other point, agrees with it in bringing the immortal minstrel to the banks of the Meles to be born, we must be altogether blind to the spirit in which local legends are composed, if we do not see here the strongest proof that the real country of Homer was that which is distinctly allowed in the legends of those very cities which are most interested in denying its claims. We say, therefore, that according to all human probability, Homer was born at Smyrna; and when we say, with equal probability, that he died at Ios, — one of the Cyclades in the Archipelago, for on this point the various accounts also agree, — we have stated all that can be said to be known with regard to the father of epic poetry in Greece. The other events of his life, as given in the larger biographies, are fictions invented, many of them, with the plain purpose of giving a historical existence to certain of the characters mentioned in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey;* or they are mere blunders of which the source is innocent and obvious. That, like all minstrels, Homer was given to wander about from place to place in the exercise of his vocation, is probable enough without any voucher, and appears quite certain from the extensive and accurate geographical information displayed in his works; but the details of his travels would be curiously retained in no man's memory; and what we have for them bears all the marks of a vulgar

forgery. The much-bespoken circumstance of his being blind, noticed in all the ancient *Lives*, if implying a mere superinduced misfortune, and not a congenital defect, might, as a matter of popular tradition, be probable enough, were the origin of the story not too plain in the double fact that a blind poet is introduced in the *Odyssey*,[1] and in the famous hymn to Apollo, which Thucydides[2] and other ancients accepted as the productions of the genuine Homer. This hymn, indeed, must be regarded as the main authority of those who claim Homer as a Sciote; for the lines run expressly, —

> Τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ, οἰκεῖ δε Χίῳ ἔνι παιπαλοέσσῃ.
> The blind old man who dwells in Chios' rocky isle;

and there is certainly no evidence so strong in favor of Smyrna, provided only it could be proved — what no scholar now dreams — that these lines were really so said and sung by the veritable singer of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But after this line is rejected, there remains no ground for the claims of Chios, save that weak one expressly mentioned by Strabo,[3] that in this city there flourished the famous guild or brotherhood of minstrels (of whom more anon), known by the name of the Homeridæ; a fact of no more power, when critically examined, to prove that Homer himself was a Chiote, than the fact of Calvinistic theology being very dominant in Scotland, would prove that the author of the doctrine was born in Edinburgh.

The age of Homer is a matter about which less that is satisfactory can be stated than with regard to his country. That if not a Smyrniote he was at least a native of that part of Asia Minor, is proved not merely by the traditional evidence just adduced, but by the internal evidence of the poems themselves — by their rich tone, color, and style, and

[1] *Odyssey*, viii. 64. [2] *History*, iii. 104. [3] Strabo, XIV. p. 645.

also by many well-known facts relative to the early rise and growth of poetic literature among the Greeks. But chronology is, in the nature of the thing, a matter with which popular tradition has nothing to do: and the internal evidence of the poems themselves on this head, though strong enough, perhaps, to exclude certain extreme suppositions, affords a pretty wide range to a merely conjectural chronology. Herodotus, in a well-known passage,[1] places Homer about four hundred years older than himself; that is, in the year 850 B. C., or thereabout; Aristotle, in the account given by him in the legend of Ios, makes the birth of Homer contemporary with the great Ionic migration (1044 B. C.); while Dionysius of Samos, the cyclographer, threw him back as far as the Trojan War, which he describes. To determine exactly between these contending dates, and at least a dozen more given in a very full scheme by Lauer,[2] is of course hopeless; but the circumstances of the case warrant us in refusing to allow any date for Homer, so early as that assumed by the cyclographer, or later than that given by Herodotus. For such an extensive collection of myths as that connected with the Trojan war requires time to grow; and Homer manifestly talks of the heroes of the *Iliad* as belonging to some age not altogether identical with his own. The mingled elements, also, of Ionic and Æolic Hellenism, which appear in the Homeric poems, did not exist in Asia Minor, at the early date supposed by Dionysius, or those who come near to him. As little, on the other hand, can we go beyond Herodotus, in bringing Homer nearer to the date of the Olympiads than the year 850, for the very uncertainty in which the wisest Greeks were as to the age of the poet, proves that he lived at a period considerably more ancient than the first year (776 B. C.) of their recognized national chronology.

[1] *History*, ii., 53.

[2] *Homerische Poesie*, p. 124.

Perhaps some reader may have been content that we should allude to these disputed points in a manner even more perfunctory than we have done; but in these days of rampant historical skepticism, imported wholesale from Germany, it is absolutely necessary to make some attempt to mark distinctly where the cloud-architecture of mere imagination ends, and the mainland of actual tradition, hazy and yet indubitable, commences. In reference to these skeptical views of the Germans, we cannot avoid noticing here that some of them have even gone so far as to deny the existence of such a man as Homer altogether; and, what is of more consequence to us, the language, which some of the more wild of that sect are still in the habit of using, has been adopted by some of our own scholars whose name is sufficient to make even their incidental errors dangerous. Mr. Grote, for instance, uses the following language:— "The name of Homer — *for I disallow his historical personality* — means the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and nothing else;" and again, "Homer is no individual man, but the divine or heroic father of the Gentile Homerids;"[1] that is to say, while the whole of the Greek nation believed they had once had a great epic poet to whose extraordinary genius, as to a natural and adequate cause, they attributed their two great epic poems (just as the ordered world finds the best explanation of its existence in a God); we, the learned of modern times, are bound to doubt whether that poet had any existence, and to treat these poems as if they were not productions of a great poetic genius at all, but the creation of some half dozen or a score of second-rate rhymers, whose names no person ever cared to know, but who were cunning enough to raise themselves into a fictitious historical consequence by the creation of a symbolical head of their corporation called Homer, whom the silly world

[1] *History*, Vol. ii., p. 179.

has, for nearly three thousand years, been willing to take for a substantial reality! Now, it ought at once to be granted to Mr. Grote, and those Germans whose nebulous notions he has, in this matter, imported, that there was a tendency in the earliest times of the Greeks, as perhaps of all highly imaginative nations, to represent in the historical form certain favorite ideas and theories, theological and ethnological; which allegorical or mythical narratives a modern reader of a prosaic temper may be apt to mistake for realities. Of the religious myth in particular, the historic was the generally accredited form, to such an extent that the original physico-theological ideas which these narratives were invented to convey, are now but dimly discernible behind the motley company of human incarnations by which they are impersonated. Nay, more, it may even be true in some cases, according to a favorite notion of the Germans (Uschold and others), that the religious symbols of our century became the anthropomorphic gods of another, and dwindled down to the merely human heroes of a third. Further, it is not to be denied that beyond the sphere of religion the practice seems to have prevailed among the Greeks to a certain extent of inventing names of characters, apparently historical, to symbolize the origin and the connection of certain notable races of men. Thus Hellen in whose personality the most critical of ancients believed,[1] is taken by almost all modern writers, even by Clinton, for a mere name invented as a symbol of the common nationality of the people whom he represented. But even with regard to national genealogies, we are in nowise entitled to assume that because they are peculiarly liable to forgery, therefore no national genealogy is in any case to be accepted to be true. Much less are we to make a general rule of evaporating all the most deeply-rooted local traditions of a

[1] See Thucyd., I. 3.

country into mere misty imaginations and unsubstantial symbols, and to assume that the "manufacture of fictitious personalities" (Grote), was the only or the main function of the popular intellect of any people, at any stage of their civilization. Man is a real creature, and he deals with realities; and of all realities, those which he is least disposed to lose hold of are the great men whose energy fathers any extraordinary product of the national life, and whose name marks any great national epoch. In conformity with this real tendency of human nature we find that in all popular poetry the actions of famous men — the national heroes — form a much more prominent element than symbolized religious or physical philosophy;[1] and the periods of intellectual and political advancement marked by such names as Homer and Theseus are precisely those in which a great reality would be more powerful to seize the minds of men than the most significant symbol. Extraordinary and even miraculous stories in the life of a historical personage ought not in the very least to shake our credit in his fundamental reality; for it is precisely because his reality was so striking and so overpowering that these miraculous stories were invented, and naturally found credit. The Israelites carried back the genealogy of their nation to the son of Isaac, from whom they sprung. Had the books of Moses, with all their circumstantial details and lifelike reality never been written, a German philologer might have said that Jacob was merely a symbol. In the same way, the Athenians ascribed certain great political changes in their country to the son of Ægeus, of whom various wonderful and superhuman stories are told; but these stories no more justify us in throwing him into the limbo of symbols, than the ridiculous lies about Abraham and the other patriarchs, current in the Koran and other Eastern books, would entitle us to disallow the historical

[1] See some admirable remarks in Lauer, p. 131–174.

reality of the father of the faithful. In the same way — though there are some things of a plainly mythical nature in the traditional legends of Homer — to conclude from these that Homer himself is a myth, is to argue with the precipitation of a whim-intoxicated German, not with the deliberation of a sober-minded and judicious Englishman. Indeed, it is only doing the Germans justice to state that the "disallowance of the personality of Homer," to use Mr. Grote's phrase, is by no means so common among them now as in the first fever of intemperate Wolfian enthusiasm it might have been without offence. William Müller, the most popular champion of Wolfian ideas, says distinctly in his *Vorschule* (p. 51) that "we are not called to question the personal existence of Homer;" and Professor Welcker (to whose learned labors all students of Homer are so much indebted), Nitsch, C. O. Müller, Dr. Ihne (in Smith's *Dictionary*), Baümlein, Lauer, and others who have written recently on the subject, show a moderation of temper, and a soundness of historical judgment, very far removed from what we are accustomed to designate as "German extravagance." It is becoming evident to a thoughtful observer that even among that most speculative, skeptical, and, intellectually speaking, most anarchical nation of Europe, the conflict of extreme views is beginning to produce its natural results in the recognition of the great human realities which lie at the bottom of the strong though unpurified historical convictions of the masses.

So much for the Poet. The next question that presents itself in connection with the name of Homer, is that of the authenticity of the works which go under his name. What security have we that the poems we now read with such delight and instruction are the identical works which Aristotle analyzed, which Plato denounced, which Thucydides and Strabo quoted as the best authority for some of the earliest and most important facts in Greek history and topography?

What guarantee further that the works which the great writers of the classic age of Greece, received as genuine works of the great Ionian bard, actually were so; and how far they might not have been made subject to various interpolations and mutilations in the three or four centuries that elapsed between the heroic age, when they were compared, and the historic age, when we find them made the subject of literary study and criticism? The importance of these questions will appear the more strongly, when we bear in mind that the celebrity of Homer naturally led to the national practice of stamping with his name many poetical works of a popular character, in which the stern tests applied by a severe criticism, refuse to find any marks of so illustrious a paternity. Prominent among these are the Homeric hymns, treated as authentic by Thucydides, and published as undoubted works of the great bard in the *Editio Princeps*, and other notable editions by modern scholars. Of the same kind are the *Cypria* already mentioned, of the contents of which a short account is given by Proclus, the grammarian. To Homer also was very generally attributed by the ancients the Colopherian poem called *Margites;* and the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* is an example of one of the many *παίγνια*, or humorous popular pieces, with the composition of which the singer of the wrath of Achilles is supposed to have amused his mighty mind in his hours of relaxation. With regard to all these, it may be sufficient to state, that the ancients themselves were very far from exhibiting a serious agreement as to their authorship; and their being attributed to Homer must be viewed as rather a floating popular belief, than a strong national conviction. Such being their character, it could not be expected that they should stand muster before the scrutinizing glance of modern criticism, and the skeptical analysis of the Germans. In talking of Homeric poems we must, therefore, remove these minor works altogether from

our view; but the fact of their having been for a long period so generally received as genuine works of the poet, leads us to treat with the greatest consideration the caution of those who demand the severest proof for the real authorship of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Now, with regard to these two great works, there is, in the first place, not the slightest reason to doubt that we possess and use them, so far as the contents and the text are concerned, exactly as they were possessed and used by the Greeks of the classic ages; and with regard to their authorship, the faith which we have that these identical works were the genuine works of the great Ionian epopœist, was the general faith of the whole ancient world, both Greek and Roman; and in the case of the *Iliad*, at least, (for there were some difficulties started by a few curious inquirers with regard to the *Odyssey*,) a faith for centuries unshaken by a single breath of contradiction. That the *Iliad*, which we now read, is substantially the *Iliad* of Pindar and of Plato, can be proved to the satisfaction of any sane man, exactly in the same way that the Christian Scriptures, read now in the Christian churches, are proved to be substantially the same as those expounded by the earliest bishops, and sanctioned by the most authoritative councils of the church. To the Greeks, Homer was in fact a Bible, and guarded with all the care and all the piety that belongs to such a book; a fact which at once explains the extravagant, and to our feeling, illiberal zeal with which Plato denounces it in his ideal polity, and at the same time puts into our hands a guarantee of the surest and most sacred kind for the general authenticity of the poems as we now read them. No person who is even superficially read in the Greek classics can fail to have observed how constantly all writers of note, from the severe and stern Aristotle, to the light and sportive Lucian, refer to Homer as to a writer of whom a universal knowledge might be presupposed in all their readers, and to

whom a universal respect was paid. The consequence of this frequent reference is, that there is no writer of antiquity of whom we are more sure that we possess his genuine words as current in the mouths of the ancients, than we are with regard to the author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But more than this. In the time of the Ptolomies, and when the productive power of Greek literature had begun to faint and die away, there was a special band of learned critics and commentators, who made it their business to collate the various recensions of the Homeric epics, and to transmit their text to us with as much conscientious fidelity as was possible. Prominent among these were Aristarchus and Zenodotus, of whom the first has transmitted his name to modern times as a popular appellative for the literary man who exercises the higher sort of documental criticism as a vocation; and not only do we know that such men existed, and exercised their philologic care on the great national treasure of the Homeric text, but we have in the Venetian scholia, first published from the St. Mark's library by Villoison (1788), a series of notices of their method of critical procedure, and a list of their asterisks and obelisks, sufficient to dispel all doubt as to the unadulterated transmission of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, at least from the period when letters began to be a study and an occupation in Greece. But when did this period begin? and what have we to say for the nature of the guarantees of authenticity, whatever they were, that existed before this period? These are really serious questions, the answers to which have raised difficulties that have made wise men pause and foolish men stumble, not without observation. On all hands it is allowed that Pisistratus, the well-known Athenian tyrant (B. C. 560), was the first, so far at least as Athens is concerned, to collect together the various books or rhapsodies of the Homeric epics, which were generally sung or recited separately, and to arrange and publish them — to

use a modern phrase — in the form in which they now exist. Pisistratus, therefore, or rather his literary coadjutors, among whom Onomacritus is prominently named, must be regarded as our first historical guarantee for the text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we now possess it; but the details of his literary labors are unfortunately not in the least known to us; so from this point backward we are left to conjecture, to historical probabilities and internal evidence, and to the hundred and one small skeptical doubts and skeptical solutions of those doubts, which will never cease to exercise the wits of those who are born to torment themselves in this way.

The question whether the *Iliad* as arranged by Pisistratus was, both in point of matter and arrangement, exactly the same as the *Iliad*, of which Homer was the reputed author, is a question that in the nature of the case admits of no perfectly satisfactory answer. *Absolutely* the same of course in the nature of human things it cannot be; for even the Christian Scriptures, guarded as they have been by the double sanction of individual and corporate authority, have not been transmitted through eighteen centuries of literary record without being made subject to several very notable interpolations; nor can it even be said that any man at the present day can feel the same degree of certainty with regard to the text of Homer that he does with regard to that of Milton, Tasso, Dante, or even Virgil. Why? Not only because of the greater lapse of time; for in a question of documentary criticism this is often a point of comparatively small moment; but because of the different conditions under which these works were composed, and the different mediums through which, in their earliest stage, they were transmitted. We read of no Pisistratus that first collected the scattered books of the Æneid; the very MS. which Dante gloried in, or something as good, is no doubt lying in the Grand Duke's library in Florence at the present hour. In

the case of these poets people may be vexed with various readings and doubtful lines, — such questions as curious editors will raise even with regard to modern Scotts and Byrons; but there is no talk about cutting out whole books, and the strange process with which learned Germans are so familiar, of restoring a great poem to its integrity by depriving it of some of its most beautiful parts. Let us endeavor, then, to fix a steady eye on the real state of the Homeric text at the time when it was collected by Pisistratus. What reason have we to suppose that it was then to any considerable extent interpolated, or changed in any way from its original condition as it came from the mouth of Homer? The answer to this question depends upon another. Who were the conservators of that trust, previous to the time of Pisistratus; and what safeguards were they provided with against those invasions of spurious matter to which all works of extensive circulation, and general popularity, are especially subject? The conservators of the trust are, in the first place, the national ἀοιδοὶ, minstrels or bards, who, like Homer himself, made a profession of singing songs and epic poems for the amusement of the people; and when these had begun to wane, they were succeeded by the rhapsodists or popular reciters, who performed the same functions, but with less original genius and less social dignity in an age when historians, and orators, and philosophers, and rhetoricians, had usurped many of the functions that had originally been exercised by the ἀοιδὸς. Now it is of immense importance in the criticism of Homer to ascertain clearly if possible what was the moral position of the original minstrel's profession with regard to the great poet; for on this depends the likelihood of their either loosely interpolating or conscientiously respecting the integrity of his works. That they cannot have felt the same religious sort of respect for him that arose in the Greeks of a later age, seems pretty evident; they were minstrels by trade as well

as he, and could only look upon him in the exercise of their profession as *primus inter pares*. Nevertheless, they did respect him very much; of which we have ample evidence in the existence of the famous guild or institution of poets of Chios, known by the name of the *Homeridæ*, or sons of Homer, concerning whom we have the most distinct testimony in Harpocration. Whether any of the actual descendants of the poet formed the original nucleus of this fraternity we cannot tell; but its existence under that designation is ample proof of the extraordinary respect in which Homer continued to be held in the parts of Asia nearest to his birthplace, and affords a sufficient practical guarantee that the professional minstrels who were incorporated under this name would not, from mere rash conceit, be inclined to tamper with the real tradition of the Smyrnæan muse of which they were the select depositaries. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that a poem like the *Iliad*, made not to be read as a continuous book, but to be sung in separate parts for the public amusement, was peculiarly liable to have such additions made to it or variations as the occasion might require. Of this our own ballads[1] supply everywhere abundant proof, the existing version of which is often pieced together from a variety of different texts, presenting all sorts of deficiencies and redundancies. That something of this kind should not have taken place with regard to the Homeric poems in general circulation through the scattered tribes of the Greeks, would have been positively miraculous; and we must suppose that the principal business of Pisistratus, in collecting these poems, was not, as some have strangely supposed, to create an order which never existed, but to fix an order which was in danger of being lost. Whether in doing so he had the advantage of any complete correct text derived from the Homeridæ of Chios, with

[1] See Chambers' *Songs and Ballads of Scotland*, p. 106, note.

which to compose and correct the scattered rhapsodies in popular currency, we cannot say; but it is not at all unlikely; — at any rate he would have little difficulty in restoring the original arrangement of the books, partly because that order in the generality of cases shines out manifestly from the inherent character of the plot, and the progress of the story, partly because there could not fail to exist among the more literate and accomplished of the rhapsodists some one who could recite by memory not merely single books, but the whole concatenation of books, as the Homeridæ of Chios had received them from their great father. Most assuredly, as has been insisted on both by Baümlein and Grote, he never could have set himself seriously to make extensive modern interpolations in poems, the contents of which were well known over the whole of Greece, and had in Athens been made the subject of a special public regulation by their great lawgiver, Solon.[1]

In the view here given of the respective functions of the Homeridæ, and of Pisistratus, in the transmission of the Homeric poems, we have said nothing about the famous question, *whether the art of writing was known in Homer's time?* because a little reflection will show that this question has really very little bearing on the genuineness of the poems as we now possess them, and besides is a question that does not admit of a satisfactory answer. At the first blush, indeed, when a modern who is the slave of pen and ink, hears it stated that in all likelihood the great bard of the *Iliad* could neither read nor write, he is apt to feel very much as if the whole foundation for his critical faith in the poet was removed from beneath his feet, and there was no longer any ground for him to stand on. How many an eloquent modern speaker might be struck dumb if pen, ink, and paper were suddenly removed from the category of things

[1] See *Diog. Laert.*, in Solon, 9.

that be! But they managed these matters differently on Parnassus and Helicon in the days when Memory was the mother of the Muses, and the Muses could sing sweetly without help from a goose quill. We have the most distinct testimony of Julius Cæsar (B. C. vi. 14), to the effect "that the pupils of the Druids learn by heart a great number of verses; and some continue twenty years in a course of instruction. *Nor do they think it right to commit their doctrines to writing, though in other matters they use the Greek alphabet. This they appear to do for two reasons; first, that they may not make their religious mysteries too common and profane by general publication, and again, that they may not weaken the power of memory in their scholars by teaching them to trust to written notes; for nothing is more common than that the abundance of literary helps teaches persons to remit their exertions in committing their knowledge to memory.*" This remarkable passage reveals to us in the most striking manner the real secret of the transmission of the Homeric poems without the help of written manuscripts; the memory of the minstrels was not more uncertain, but more true and trustworthy for this very reason, that they were not accustomed to depend for the faithful recollections of the poems which they recited, upon a leaf of papyrus or a library itself. In estimating the memorial powers of these men we must never forget not only that they exercised their art under intellectual conditions exactly the reverse of those which now exist, but also that they had no other business or interests by which to distract their attention, and so could perform certain feats with ease, that bear the same relation to our common exercises of memory, that tumbling and rope-dancing do to common walking. It is always in our power, by exclusive and persevering exercise of a favorite faculty in a favorite sphere, to perform apparent prodigies. We shall therefore readily disabuse ourselves of the superficial modern notion that written memoranda are neces-

sary to the faithfulness of versified tradition; the "wonder" as it has been called by Grote, of the "preservation" of such long poems from such early ages will become part of the common intellectual drill of an age eloquent without paper, and poetical without ink; and the question will only remain, as a matter of legitimate curiosity with regard to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, whether their author was unacquainted with those useful arts of literary conservation, the knowledge of which is in our days justly accounted a necessary element in the lowest stages of popular education. Now with regard to the use of letters in Greece, the general voice of Hellenic antiquity pointed to Cadmus as having imported these cunning symbols from Phœnicia at a period far antecedent to the age of Homer, or even the supposed date of the Trojan War; and this tradition is consistent not only with the philosophical analysis of their letters of the alphabet, but with the then general state of the civilization, and the admitted intercourse between Asia and the West, as having taken place in various forms at a very early period of the history of the world. There is every probability, therefore, in favor of the belief that letters, in some shape or other, were known in Greece, at whatever date, between the Trojan War and the year 850, which may be assumed as most convenient for the age of Homer. But from this probable belief with regard to the epoch of the knowledge of letters in Greece, the distance to a reasonable conviction, with regard to the practice of Homer himself in composing and preserving his poems, is very great, and not lightly to be overlooked. That letters, when first introduced, were used only in great public matters, and for inscriptions in wood, stone, lead, and other heavy materials, not for writing a long concatenation of poetic rhapsodies, is conformable to the nature of the thing, and to every testimony on the subject. According to the usual slow progress of human affairs, three centuries at least may well have been required

to transfer letters from the rare service of temple-porticos and monumental pillars, to the common use of literary conservation; so that, even assuming the use of letters for public purposes in the days of Homer, the probability may be considered very small that they were actually used by the poet or his immediate successors for any merely literary purpose. This probability becomes even less, when we consider that there is not a single allusion in the whole forty-eight books of the two poems to writing or books, as a part of the civilization which they describe;[1] and though this in itself were no conclusive argument, as any poet who uses pen and ink is not even in these days obliged to make his heroes do so, yet taken in connection with the general character of the poems, and the circumstances of the time, as ascertained by historical analogy, it is in nowise to be looked on as an altogether indifferent circumstance.

So far we have confined our remarks to the external aids and authorities, by means of which the poet and his works are in the first place commended to our attention. It now remains from this general basis of outward historical probabilities and presumptions, to direct our inquiry into the character and genius of the poems themselves, and from this investigation either to transmute our probabilities into certainties, or throw them aside as unsupported, or contradicted by a higher, and the highest sort of evidence. For no mere array of authorities, however venerable, can in the long run support an incoherent tradition that carries its own contradiction in its face. This eternal superiority of immanent and inherent, to merely accredited evidence, has, since Bentley's famous dissection of the epistles of Phalaris, banished from the shelves of authentic classical tradition, many a hoary tome that had long held an honored place there, along with the most venerated worthies of the Greek and

[1] The σήματα λυγρὰ in *Iliad*, vi. 168, is ambiguous.

Roman pantheon. How stands the case with regard to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*? Are these works what they have for nearly three thousand years been reputed to be — the great poems of a great old Ionian poet — or do they bear the trick of forgery on their face, and show the patchwork of a bungling fabricator on the phylacteries of their outer garment?

The severe ordeal which the Homeric poems, in the way of internal analysis, have undergone, takes its rise in modern times from the publication of a famous edition by F. A. Wolf, a German professor of extraordinary talent, in the year 1795. This scholar, partly following the bent of his own genius, partly, no doubt, carried along by the general revolutionary tendencies of the age, did, in the Prolegomena prefixed to his edition, set forth an extremely skeptical doctrine with regard to Homer and his poetry, with such rare learning, vigor, and taste, that it was impossible for German minds to resist him; and though the whole tendency and love of English scholarship runs in a directly contrary direction,[1] as

[1] It is remarkable that the germs of the Wolfian theory travelled from this country over to Germany; and Wolf, in his *Prolegomena*, honestly recognizes Wood and Bentley as valuable pioneers of the doctrine which he so eloquently enforces. Bentley's well-known utterance with regard to Homer is found in his *Remarks on a late Discourse on Free Thinking*, by Phileleutherus Lipsiensis (*Works* by Dyce, iii. 304). "To prove Homer's universal knowledge, our author says, '*he designed his poem for eternity to please and instruct mankind;*' but take my word for it, poor Homer, in those circumstances and early times, had never such aspiring thoughts. *He wrote a sequel of songs and rhapsodies to be sung by himself for small earnings and good cheer, at festivals and other days of merriment;* the *Iliad* he made for the men, and the *Odyssey* for the other sex;" from which passage thrown out incidentally, however, be it remembered, and not deliberately measured in every word, one thing seems plain, that by using the word "Sequel," the great critic gives us plainly to understand that he held there was an essential unity of plan going through both works, which puts him plainly out of the roll of thorough-going Wolfians, and advocates of what Nitsch calls the Klein-lieder-theorie. Among other

the great work of Clinton sufficiently testifies, it cannot be denied that beyond the pale of mere Oxonians the Wolfian views have exercised no small influence in forming the critical opinions of some of the best educated minds in England. The critical spirit of the age, the skeptical researches of Niebuhr with regard to Roman history, and the increasing action of German scholarship on the learning of this country, have all tended to produce this result. The theory of Wolf, founded not merely on a minute critical analysis of the poems, but, as he imagined also, on satisfactory external evidence, was to the effect, that whether a great poet called Homer ever existed or not, the two great poems generally attributed to him are no homogeneous works created by the plastic power of a presiding genius, but mere aggregates of various origin, gathered together from the great floating element of popular poetry in Greece, and cunningly licked into shape by certain expert literary artizans in the days of Pisistratus. Now, with regard to the external evidence on which this paradox is founded, it seems at this hour generally agreed, even among the Germans, that the authorities relied on by Wolf do in nowise support his extreme conclusion, do not in fact go beyond the historical statement of the matter which we have just made, — a statement perfectly consistent both with the personal existence of one great poet, and the organizing action of his presiding spirit on the two great poems that go by his name. The advocates of the Wolfian theory, therefore, are now driven to confine themselves to a series of arguments drawn from the minute critical examination of the text of the poems, by means of which they think they have evolved such an imposing array of inconsistencies, as is utterly incompatible

notable anticipators of Wolf's theory, the case of the Neapolitan philosopher Vico, has often been mentioned. See *Scienza nuova libro terzo; della discoverta del vero Omero,* first published in the year 1725, and repeatedly reprinted.

with the belief in the presiding control of one great mind. Among those who have distinguished themselves in this field of what we may call Homeric histology, is Carl Lachmann, lately deceased, a Berlin professor of great erudition and subtlety, as attested by well-known works in various departments of philological investigation. It behooves us, therefore, to inquire, on what presumptions and on what principles the analytical criticism of this school is founded; and when we have shown that these presumptions require to be inverted, and that these principles are altogether false or altogether misapplied, we may spare our readers the trouble of a minute and curious refutation of the individual objections. Those who wish to pursue the question into its details, may consult the little tract of Lachmann,[1] or the English work of Colonel Mure,[2] a book replete with the best German learning, and, what is of greater consequence, animated throughout with a spirit of good-sense, and a fine poetical appreciation, which very few Germans can boast of.

In an investigation of this kind the presumptions with which a man starts, though not always distinctly set forth, are of the utmost consequence in determining his procedure. The false historical presumptions from which Wolf proceeded, naturally led him to seek for flaws in the texture of the Homeric poems; and it is manifest that even Mr. Grote, who justly considers the extreme Wolfian theory as quite untenable, in propounding his wild scheme of resolving the *Iliad* into two distinct parts, has been influenced, partly by his desire to mitigate what he calls "the wonder" of the creation, and the preservation of two such long continuous poems, bearing the stamp of one mind, in an age when writing was altogether unknown. That there are no external

[1] *Betrachtungen über Homer's Ilias*, Berlin, 1847.

[2] *A Critical History of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, second edition, London, 1854, vols. i. and ii.

historical presumptions of this kind we have already attempted to show; a presumption of a different kind we shall now state. It is not to be presumed that Homer would be anxiously accurate about the mere articulation or joint-work of his epic poems, for several reasons. *First*, because he was a poet, and aimed, as all true poets do, mainly at producing an effect on the feelings and imaginations of his hearers, not on their mere cognitive capacity. Small mistakes in incidental matters taken cognizance of by the curious understanding only, might, without offence, be committed by a great singer of poetry, as they would certainly not be observed by a healthy-minded hearer; and that mistakes of this kind actually have been made, and are even now daily made by poets and novelists of the highest order, has been shown by Colonel Mure in the most effective manner. *Second*, because he was a popular poet, a wandering minstrel with a lyre in his hand, as he is truly represented in all the old biographies, and not a learned Southey sitting in a library, with books, and desk, and pen, and ink, printers' proof sheets, publishers' quarterly reviews, and every sort of literary apparatus of the newest and most approved description. In judging of the *Iliad* as a whole, we must never forget, though it seems to be very generally forgotten, that it was not, could not be, Homer's immediate object to compose a great whole, for the plain and simple reason that he had comparatively few opportunities of using such a whole. His art, therefore, was to concatenate a series of parts, which, while they might be used with effect on a few great festive occasions as a whole, were meant to produce their general and most appreciable effect, in the shape of parts either absolutely complete in themselves, or admitting of being easily supplemented by the indwelling traditional lore, which the poet could legitimately presuppose in the minds of his hearers. Something analogous to this we have in the great historical plays of Shakspeare, consisting of several

parts, in any of which if there happened to be some small inconsistencies with the other parts, none but a curious person making a business of criticism would ever notice it, as the parts, though connected in conception, are so constructed as to give the impression of completeness, where they are represented as separate wholes. If this point be duly considered, and there is nothing more certain or more duly attested in the history of these poems, the weakness of a great number of the objections made by Lachmann and Grote to the concatenation of the *Iliad* will instantly appear. The tenth book for instance — that in which the midnight expedition of Diomedes and Ulysses is described — has, it is said, no necessary connection with the parts of the poem that precede or follow, and might be cut out without injury. Of course; because it was the object of the poet to string together a number of little wholes, originally independent, that they might still remain little wholes, and yet become parts of a great whole — an exquisite trick of art plainly, and which, as the whole history of popular poetry teaches, it required precisely a mighty genius like Homer to perform. And this brings us to the third presumption, with which we must start in judging of the alleged inconsistencies of the *Iliad*. We must bear in mind that Homer did not make his materials, but received them; the little wholes which he had to recast and organize into a great whole, already existed in the minds and in the mouths of the people whom he addressed, just as the Romaic ballads that arose out of the war of independence in 1821–7 exist in the minds and mouths of the Hellenes of the present day, waiting for some second Homer, it may be, to fuse them with a great epos of Missolonghi, when the day may at length have come for that reconstruction of that Byzantine empire which the late Czar of Russia said he would on no account tolerate. In the same way an epic poem of Caledonian loyalty, were the times favorable, might be made out of the materials

contained in the Scottish jacobite songs; and a grander epos still called "The Fall of Napoleon," might be constructed containing many finely dramatic materials from the war songs composed by Körner and others in the great German rising of 1813. Now, if the rich materials of popular traditionary song, out of which Homer constructed the *Iliad* (and no person who knows any thing about such matters will think it more probable that he made it out of nothing) contained, as they could not but contain, certain elements that would be incongruous, when the different parts were worked up into a new whole; and if Homer did not care — as the practice of his art did not require him to be particularly curious — whether every line or phrase that marked the original independence of these parts, was nicely obliterated, it is manifest that the small flaws in the concatenation which may here and there be visible to the curious eye, prove, not as Lachmann imagines, that one poet did not organize the whole, but that Homer gave himself no concern to disguise the fact, that the several parts of his poem, both in the popular tradition and in the actual practice of his art, had a complete and independent existence apart from the magnificent whole into which his genius had organized them.

These considerations will enable the student of Homer to make short work, not only with the hypercritical captiousness and the peeping anatomy of Lachmann's *Betrachtungen*, but also with the more large and philosophical analysis of Mr. Grote. We must not start in our inquiry into the unity of the *Iliad*, with the strong inclination to magnify the importance of small inconsistencies, but with the most charitable desire possible to overlook them. This poet, as compared with Virgil, Dante, or Milton, demands the special indulgence of the critic; and yet it does rather seem that from Wolf down to Grote, the whole army of objectors are keenly set upon being particularly severe, in many cases positively ill-natured, and, from a poetic point of view, as

Colonel Mure has triumphantly shown, positively unjust. For not only do they pay no regard to those kindly considerations which we have stated, arising out of the peculiar position of the poet, and the nature of his materials, but with a perverse ingenuity pardonable scarcely in Germans, they insist on judging poetry by rules applicable only to works composed with a strictly practical, or a purely scientific view. If an experienced soldier like Napoleon could criticize with such a cutting eloquence the description of the taking of Troy by the polished and learned Virgil which yet speaks admirably to the imagination,[1] how strange and how unreasonable that a gentleman of Mr. Grote's discernment should urge as a strong proof against the authenticity of the seventh book of the *Iliad*, the circumstance that it represents a ditch or dyke, as having been made in the ninth year of the war, which, according to all principles of military tactics, should have been made, as Thucydides[2] seems to have taken the liberty of supposing it was made, in the first year! The answer to all such very scientific cavils is this, that Homer was neither a soldier nor a critic, but a poet; and that when composing the seventh book of the *Iliad*, he had before his mind's eye not a future Vegetius or a Grote, but only the wrath of Achilles, and the place which that occupied in the popular traditions of Æolia. If critical spectacles were not used when popular poems were composed, their correct appreciation can allow no place to scientific microscopes. Many things may be discovered by scientific eyes, — wonders in the white rock, wonders in the blue cheese, — but the character and effect of popular poetry does not come within the laws of that particular kind of vision. Even Mr. Grote, who has so ably exposed the absurdity of the Wolfian "small song theory" (*Klein-lieder-theorie*), which resolves the *Iliad* into an aggregate of

[1] See Classical Museum, Vol. I. p. 205. [2] History, I. 11.

separate ballads, implying no common authorship on the ground of alleged inconsistencies, has, in attempting to resolve the same great work into two separate works, the *Achilleid* and the *Iliad*, adopted a principle of criticism, which every man who has any practical knowledge of poets and poetry, must feel to be quite out of place. "The last two books of the poem," he says, "were probably additions to the original *Achilleid;* for the *death of Hector satisfies the exigencies of a coherent scheme*, and we are not entitled to extend the oldest poem beyond the limits which such necessity prescribes. And in the spirit of this criticism, he cuts out the whole books, from the second to the seventh inclusive, because the coherent scheme of an *Achilleid* is sufficiently satisfied without them, and there is no necessity for extending the oldest poem beyond the limits which such exigency requires. But a great poet is not influenced in the selection or the arrangement of his material by any exigency of this kind; that nude coherency of scheme which satisfies a mere logical mind, may omit precisely those elements which work most powerfully on his own mind and that of his hearers; not imaginative meagreness and parsimony, but luxuriance and exuberance is his law. On the whole, the candid student of Lachmann and Grote, if he be a person of native poetical appreciation, will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion, that the great mass of the recent skeptical objections against the organic unity of the *Iliad*, proceed on essentially perverse and oblique principles, and that the brave old minstrel has assuredly fallen on evil days, when men are eager to judge him for whose judgment he never wrote, and by canons which he never acknowledged.

The current of these remarks by no means implies that there are no interpolations in the received text of Homer. They are merely to the effect, that the sharpest scrutiny of modern criticism and hypercriticism has failed to point out

any such gross incongruities in the component parts of the poem, as would distinctly indicate the separate authorship of those parts. In other words, the positive impression of an organic unity which the unlearned reader receives from the perusal of these poems, can in nowise be considered to have been nullified by the multiform endeavors of learned men to prove, that these famous poems are, to any considerable extent, an aggregation of independent and unharmonized integers. That those integers once existed in that crude state, may be assumed as most certainly true; but the poems, as we now have them, prove, in the face of the most cruel analysis, that these crude elements did, in the earliest ages of Greek culture, come under the fusing and formative influence of a great poet-mind so completely, that any attempt to resolve them into their primitive elements by the method of mere analysis must prove a failure. With this understanding, every reasonable man must be willing to admit that there are, and must in the nature of the case be, not a few extraneous additions to a work, which was a sort of public property in everybody's hands for several hundred years before it was finally fixed down to the literary form in which we now have it. Some of the interpolations, of course, may be pointed out, with more or less success, according to the general laws by which incongruities in literary documents are exposed; but in addition to the presumptions for leniency of treatment already stated, the critical reviser of the Homeric text must bear in mind, that there prevails in the popular poetry of all countries a certain current tone, and common property in thought and in expression, which makes it extremely difficult, from mere internal evidence, to distinguish the original work of the great master-mind from the additions made by a skilful interpolator. Under these extremely delicate and dubious conditions, it does appear extremely strange, that Lachmann and so many other learned Germans, should talk with as

much dogmatic decision about the original constituent elements of the *Iliad*, as if they had been present at their creation, and personally superintended their manufacture; and a plain man can only conclude with regard to the whole matter, that in philology, as in metaphysics, these minute investigators have, by an intense special devotion, worked themselves into a sort of chronic insanity, from which only time and the gradual operation of certain potent political and social causes may ultimately achieve their redemption.

Before we leave this part of the subject a few words may be allowed to the famous question, Whether, assuming Homer's authorship of the *Iliad*, there be not reasonable grounds for assigning the *Odyssey* to the plastic powers of a different and less mighty minstrel? Now, if this were altogether an open question, and there were no distinct and intelligible Hellenic traditions as to the common authorship of these two wonderful poems, not a few things might be urged in favor of a separate authorship which might have weight with a reasonable critic. There is a certain more mild and subdued tone in the *Odyssey*, which, along with certain points of difference in incidental matters, might be sufficient, were there no contrary evidence to authorize the supposition of a different intellectual origin. But the great error of those who, in modern times, take upon themselves to assert the separate authorship of these works, is the groundless assumption that the general voice and tradition of Hellenic antiquity is to be taken as an element of no weight soever, in the critical estimate of such a matter. On this point we differ *toto cœlo* from the Germans, and are nothing ashamed to believe, with our learned countryman, Colonel Mure, that Aristotle, Plato, and the overwhelming majority of the highest intellects in Greece, had very sufficient reasons for placing a wide gulf between the two epic poems which they agreed to stamp with the name of Homer, and the very inferior works of a cognate character,

known afterwards under the name of the *Epic Cycle*. Nature did not produce twin Homers in those old Greek days, we may depend upon it, any more than she has produced in these days twin Dantes or twin Shakespeares.[1] If there had been a second Homer of genius large enough to produce a counterpoise to such a work as the *Iliad*, no doubt the Homeridæ of some second Chios would have been equally eager to stereotype his memory in their composition, and to immortalize themselves with his name. But precisely, we imagine, because there was only one Homer, was there only one guild of gentile Homeridæ, and one uniform undisputed authorship of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* among the Greeks till some pragmatical grammarians in meagre Alexandria (among whom a certain Xenon and Hellanicus are specialized), the prototypes of our modern Wolfians, began to nibble at imagined incongruities, and to moot the question of separate authorship. Such being the historical conditions under which the question is raised, it is manifest that the presumptions, as in the question about the unity of the *Iliad*, are all against the disintegrators; and a detailed examination of their array of minute and microscopic objections to the common authorship will, in all likelihood, bring the intelligent student, as it has brought Colonel Mure, to a distinct verdict of *not proven*. One may, indeed, urge the same objection against all the objections of the Separatists — *Χωρίζοντες* as they were called — that Mr. Grote has urged against Lachmann and the minute dissectors of the *Iliad*. "The Wolfian theory," says that eminent scholar, "explains the gaps and contradictions throughout the narrative, but it explains nothing else. In like manner, we may say the theory of the Separatists explains the small incongruities between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,

[1] "Some people believe in twenty Homers; we in one. Nature is not so prodigal of her poets." (John Wilson, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, April, 1831.)

but it leaves out of account altogether a more difficult matter to explain — the very remarkable congruity that exists between the whole style, tone, color, and materials of these poems. This congruity has been pointed out with great skill and effect by Colonel Mure, also by a recent French writer, Alexis Pierron,[1] whose words, after so much heavy discussion with the Germans, the English reader will doubtless accept as a welcome relief: —

"Mais le style, les tours de phrase, l'ordre et le mouvement des pensées! mais le versification! mais les formules consacrées! mais les épithètes traditionelles! c'est là ce que les chorizontes nègligent de comparer dans le dieux poems. Je n'hèsité pas à dire, que cent vers pris au hazard dans l'un ne ressemblent pas moins à cent vers pris dans l'autre, et pour la facture, et pour la tournure, et pour le mouvement général, que ceux-ci ne ressemblent à tous les vers qui les précèdent et les suivent. Si le style est l'homme même, comme dit Buffon, le même style c'est le même homme. Il n'y a qu'un Homère. Le style ne s'en lève pas: et, malgré tous les efforts, on ne prend pas le tour d'esprit d'un autre: on n'écrit qu'avec soi même, mieux qu'autrui ou plus mal, aussi bien peut-être, mais toujours autrement. Sans doute c'est une grande merveille, que le même homme qui a composé l'Iliade soit aussi l'auteur de l'Odyssée. Mais le phénomène de ressemblance admis pas le chorizontes est bien plus inouï encore. Le vieux Pythagoricien, Ennius, disoit que l'âme d'Homère avoit passé dans la sienne; et l'on sait quel Homère c'etoit qu' Ennius. C'est bien une autre métempsycose qu'il nous faudrait admettre, pour donner raison à ces Pythagoriciens nouveaux. Il y a une chose cent fois plus extraordinaire que l'existence d'un Homère unique, c'est l'existence de deux Homères."

After having cleared our way through this dreary accu-

[1] *Littérature Grecque*, Paris, 1850.

mulation of critical briers and brambles, it only remains that we state shortly what is the real character and worth of the Homeric poems, as we have them, and what is their proper and enduring place in the poetical literature of the world. And here we must start with a grateful recognition of the point of view on which our judgment of the Homeric poems has been placed by the labors of Wolf and his followers. Their error did not lie in their blindness to the true character of these productions, but in their attributing to a dozen or a score of Homers a phenomenon which finds a more obvious and satisfactory explanation in the time-honored recognition of one. But the genuine character of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as the poetry of the people composed to be sung, not the poetry of the individual written to be read, though previously discovered by Bentley, Vico, and Wood,[1] was never generally acknowledged and felt till it was brought forward by Wolf, and scattered over Europe by the host of enthusiastic disciples whom his genius roused into a new and vivid consciousness of a great truth. All the errors of that school, in fact, which we have been obliged to criticize in severe language, were but exaggerations and caricatures of the great truth which Wolf propounded in his *Prolegomena* of the essential generic difference between *Paradise Lost*, the epos of the scholarly man Milton, and Homer's *Iliad*, the epos of the rude Greek people. Homer lived in an age when the individual poet had not commenced to separate himself from the general culture of his people, after such a strange fashion as we see in the Shelleys, the Byrons, the Wordsworths, and the Tennysons of modern times. The poetry of Homer, therefore, represents the age of Homer more completely than the most popular of our highly cultivated modern poetry represents the age to which the poet belongs. The reason of this plainly is, that in the

[1] An Essay *On the Original Genius and Writings of Homer*, by R. Wood, Esq., London, 1770.

earliest ages of society, the minstrel was the only and the universal exponent of the highest moral and intellectual life of his age, and had an existence only as expressing this culture in a popular and effective way. Whereas, in later times, the man of genius rose into an independent existence, and often expressed merely his own cultures and that of a select body — more or less numerous — of literary sympathizers and admirers whom he might have the power to attach. The intimate relation that existed between the heroic ἀοιδὸς and his hearers may perhaps be best understood by comparing that sort of action and reaction which exists between the writers of leading articles in a newspaper like the *Times*, and the public to whom their daily appeals are addressed. A similar case occurs in the weekly addresses of a popular preacher to a religious people like the Scotch, whose faith has not degenerated into decent formalism or unmeaning ceremonial. Herein, therefore, lies the invaluable excellence of the Homeric poems, which Wolf profoundly felt, and which made him careless about the mere personality of their reputed author, — in the fact that, whether these poems be the composition of one, or a half a hundred minstrels, they are equally inspired by the breath of a great poetic soul, and that soul the highest life of the Greek people, at one of the most poetic periods of its existence. Recognizing this fundamental truth, the great German critic could readily let loose from his grasp a great many much-bespoken excellencies of the mere man Homer, apart from the Greek people, which were either quite imaginary, or not at all necessary to the main fact of the essentially popular and national character of the poems. In room of a great mass of foolish indiscriminate eulogy heaped up by various famous critics both ancient and modern, Wolf enunciated the peculiar excellence of the great king of Hellenic ballad-singers in the following simple and significant words: "Haec carmina paullo diligentius cognita admiran-

dam ostendant vim naturæ atque ingenii minorem artis, nullam reconditæ doctrinæ et exquisitæ."[1] The first great excellence of Homer's poetry, as here expressed, undoubtedly lies in its complete naturalness, simplicity, and healthiness, with an entire absence of all those faults which are the natural product of over-stimulated art in a high state of intellectual culture. In thought, Homer exhibits nothing strained, far-fetched, or affected; in sentiment, no morbid groping, no curious over-nice sensibility in particular favorite directions; in moral tone, neither prudery nor wantonness; no uncomfortable strife between the real and ideal, between poetry and life, between rhyme and reason. With the bard of the *Iliad*, as indeed to a great extent with all the Greek poets in the best ages, the ideal is only the highest step in the ladder of the real. In style again, we find in Homer, as in the Old Testament, nothing that smacks of the artist; there is no forced and studied concentration as in Thucydides and Tacitus; no stringing together of brilliant antitheses as in Velleius Paterculus; much less any theatrical turgidity and proposed pomp of words as in Lucan, and not a few of the later classics, both Greek and Roman, who flourished at a period when language had lost its native modesty and become vitiated, as a conceited beauty does by an assiduous contemplation of her own perfections. Closely connected with this complete naturalness of Homer, is his remarkable objectiveness, as the German critics call it, — that is to say, the extraordinary clearness, breadth, accuracy, and vigor of his impressions of the external world: or as an artist would say, his fine eye both for minute delicacy of detail and grandeur of general effect in his pictures. The reason of this lies in the fact that Homer lived in a perfectly natural state of society, when all men, and especially poets, were constantly called upon to use their eyes, not upon gray parch-

[1] Prolegom., 12.

ment and spotted paper, but upon the fresh and ever-changing variety of those soul-seizing pictures which nature and life are continually pouring in upon those whose eyes are quick and open to her fulness. In Homer there is found not the least trace of the anxiously subtle thought, the loose-floating sentiment, the cloudy imaginations, the dim speculations, the gray intangible abstractions that never fail to characterize the poetry of a later age, when the particular mental character of the poet assumes an undue prominence, and the writer wastes himself in a painful struggle to find adequate expressions for certain infinite longings and indefinite desires that have no counterpart in the external world, or in the bosom of any healthy-minded reader. Not a less remarkable consequence of the nice harmony between Homer and his audience was the honest faith and unaffected religiousness that breathes through every page of his two great works. Poets, indeed, are naturally a religious race, and, except under peculiar, harsh influences, readily harmonize with the theological belief of the country to whose human aspirations it is their high mission to give utterance. But in ages of high intellectual culture, when the individual often runs aside into strange tracks of private speculation, the leading minds of the day, including poets, often find themselves forced into a state of strange and uncomfortable protest against the religious convictions of the masses whom they are destined to lead; and in this way strange phenomena become visible in the literary heaven, — as in the case of Euripides, Lucretius, Lucan, Lucian, Goethe, Byron, Burns, Shelley, and many more. With difficulties of this kind, which always interfere to a great extent with a poet's popular influence, Homer had nothing to do. The theology of his day was no doubt full of puerilities, and not free from contradictions; but philosophy yet unborn had not brought these puerilities and inconsistencies into a distinctly felt collision with the higher sentiments of a healthy piety in the

mind of the great minstrel. Homer's piety is accordingly thoroughly serious, but withal playfully cheerful. Calvinistic readers might think him jesting sometimes; and grave German critics have been offended at the tone of the love affair of Ares and Aphrodite in *Odyssey* viii., which they confidently pronounce an interpolation;[1] but they are mistaken, — Lucian did not live till one thousand years afterwards and he wrote many clever comic sketches indeed, but not an *Iliad*. The epic poet, or great popular minstrel of a heroic age, is always a believer.[2]

The extraordinary excellence of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as pattern specimens of the popular epos, may be most readily discerned by comparing them with the Niebelungen-lay of the Germans, a poem composed in a similar stage of society, and so much under the same circumstances that Lachmann actually set himself to analyze it after the Wolfian fashion, and resolve it into what he considered its constituent "small songs." In this Teutonic epos the unprejudiced reader will, along with many quiet beauties, discover an utter want of that equestrian vigor, manfulness, and fire, which never remit in the sinewy and bracing course of the *Iliad*. Homer sometimes seems to take his subject easily, — either sleeps himself, no doubt, or some interpolated Homerid is sleeping in his chair, — but he is never flat, never thin, never weak. Of the Niebelungen-lay, on the other hand, we may say that breadth, dilution, and weakness are the characteristics; it is a German *Iliad*, and a *very* German *Iliad*

[1] On this point, and on the subject of Homeric interpolation generally, see some admirable remarks in a paper by W. Watkins Lloyd. *Classical Museum*, Vol. vi., p. 387.

[2] On the interesting subject of the *Theology of Homer*, see Nägelsbach's *Homerische Theologie*, Nürnberg, 1840; and *Classical Museum*, Vol. vii., p. 414. The work of Granville Penn, — "*An Examination of the Primary Argument of the Iliad*, London, 1821," — contains some ideas on this subject that must be regarded as high-flown and hyperbolical, and remote from the simple truth.

indeed, as Coleridge said of the *Messiah* of Klopstock — an *Iliad* composed by an old German in his easy chair, enveloping his ungirt muse in a loose-floating atmosphere of tobacco-smoke; — Homer in his slippers. But besides vigor, the Greek asserts his proud preëminence over the German by the healthy hilarity, and the rich sunny luxuriance of his fine Ionic temperament. One feels that these poems were written in a clime where, next to Olympian Jove, the shining Apollo was the great object of local worship. His variety and many-sidedness have been equally praised; for, though it is certainly true that there is, for our modern tastes, a very considerable superfluity of mere fighting in the *Iliad*, we must bear in mind that Homer wrote in an age when the soldier was the only hero, and for a people to whom the recital of the military exploits of their ancestors was as full of moral significance, as the trials of the Apostle Paul are to a modern Christian. Not less admirable, finally, than his vigor, his sunniness, and his luxuriant variety, are the sobriety, sense, and moderation — the truly Greek σωφροσύνη — that everywhere regulate, and keep within chaste limits, the billowy enthusiasm of the old minstrel. Occasionally, perhaps, when a patriotic feeling interferes, there may be discerned a little ludicrous exaggeration — as, for example, in the manner in which Hector is made to comport himself before the might of Achilles, in the twenty-second book; but, generally speaking, the poet's thorough naturalness and truth, keep him by a safe instinct within the nicest limits of good taste. In the Niebelungen-lay, on the other hand, as in Klopstock's *Messiah*, there is a plentiful exhibition, in the author's way, of the most appalling exaggeration. The catastrophe of the *Odyssey*, no doubt is sufficiently bloody; but this is the divine retributive vengeance of a goddess for a long series of offences of a very gross and wanton description; and, besides, it may well be called sober and moderate when contrasted with that gigantic Cyclopean architecture

of terrors cemented with streaming blood, and wrapt in flames of portentous conflagration, which forms such a grim catastrophe to the grim epos of Niebelungen.

The works of Homer have been translated into all the notable languages of the West; seldom, however, or never, it is to be feared, with the pervading perception of his true character as a great popular minstrel, the general understanding of which great truth, as we have stated, dates in Europe only from the publication of Wolf's *Prolegomena* about sixty years ago. The best Italian translations are by Cesarroti and Monti; French, by Dacier, de Rochefort, Bitaubé and Dugas-Montbel; German, by Stolberg and Voss; English, by Chapman, Hobbes, Pope, Cowper, Sotheby, and Newman.

For other details with regard to Homeric literature, which forms a library in itself, the student, besides Colonel Mure's great work, may consult Bernhardy's *Griechische Literatur*, Halle, 1845; Lauer's *Homerische Poesie*, Berlin, 1851, and Dr. Ihne's article in Smith's *Dictionary*.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was one of the most pleasing English writers of the eighteenth century. He was of a Protestant and Saxon family which had long been settled in Ireland, and which had, like most other Protestant and Saxon families, been, in troubled times, harassed and put in fear by the native population. His father, Charles Goldsmith, studied in the reign of Queen Anne at the diocesan school of Elphin, became attached to the daughter of the schoolmaster, married her, took orders, and settled at a place called Pallas, in the county of Longford. There he with difficulty supported his wife and children on what he could earn, partly as a curate and partly as a farmer.

At Pallas, Oliver Goldsmith was born in November, 1728. That spot was then, for all practical purposes, almost as remote from the busy and splendid capital in which his later years were passed, as any clearing in Upper Canada or any sheep-walk in Australasia now is. Even at this day, those enthusiasts who venture to make a pilgrimage to the birthplace of the poet, are forced to perform the latter part of their journey on foot. The hamlet lies far from any high road, on a dreary plain which, in wet weather, is often a lake. The lanes would break any jaunting car to pieces; and there are ruts and sloughs through which the most strongly built wheels cannot be dragged.

While Oliver was still a child, his father was presented to a living worth about 200*l.* a year in the county of Westmeath. The family accordingly quitted their cottage in the wilderness for a spacious house on a frequented road, near the village of Lissoy. Here the boy was taught his letters by a maid-servant, and was sent in his seventh year to a village school kept by an old quarter-master on half pay, who professed to teach nothing but reading, writing, and arithmetic, but who had an inexhaustible fund of stories about ghosts, banshees, and fairies, about the great Rapparee chiefs, Baldearg O'Donnell and galloping Hogan, and about the exploits of Peterborough and Stanhope, the surprise of Monjuich, and the glorious disaster of Brihuega. This man must have been of the Protestant religion; but he was of the aboriginal race, and not only spoke the Irish language, but could pour forth unpremeditated Irish verses. Oliver early became, and through his life continued to be, a passionate admirer of the Irish music, and especially of the compositions of Carolan, some of the last notes of whose harp he heard. It ought to be added that Oliver, though by birth one of the Englishry, and though connected by numerous ties with the Established Church, never showed the least sign of that contemptuous antipathy with which, in his days, the ruling minority in Ireland too generally regarded the subject majority. So far indeed was he from sharing in the opinions and feelings of the caste to which he belonged, that he conceived an aversion to the Glorious and Immortal Memory, and, when George the Third was on the throne, maintained that nothing but the restoration of the banished dynasty could save the country.

From the humble academy kept by the old soldier, Goldsmith was removed in his ninth year. He went to several grammar-schools, and acquired some knowledge of the ancient languages. His life, at this time, seems to have been far from happy. He had, as appears from the admira-

ble portrait of him at Knowle, features harsh even to ugliness. The smallpox had set its mark on him with more than usual severity. His stature was small, and his limbs ill put together. Among boys little tenderness is shown to personal defects; and the ridicule excited by poor Oliver's appearance, was heightened by a peculiar simplicity and a disposition to blunder which he retained to the last. He became the common butt of boys and masters, was pointed at as a fright in the play-ground, and flogged as a dunce in the school-room. When he had risen to eminence, those who had once derided him, ransacked their memory for the events of his early years, and recited repartees and couplets which had dropped from him, and which, though little noticed at the time, were supposed, a quarter of a century later, to indicate the powers which produced the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Deserted Village*.

In his seventeenth year Oliver went up to Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar. The sizars paid nothing for food and tuition, and very little for lodging; but they had to perform some menial services from which they have long been relieved. They swept the court; they carried up the dinner to the fellows' table, and changed the plates and poured out the ale of the rulers of the society. Goldsmith was quartered, not alone, in a garret, on the window of which his name, scrawled by himself, is still read with interest. From such garrets many men of less parts than his have made their way to the woolsack or to the episcopal bench. But Goldsmith, while he suffered all the humiliations, threw away all the advantages of his situation. He neglected the studies of the place, stood low at the examinations, was turned down to the bottom of his class for playing the buffoon in the lecture-room, was severely reprimanded for pumping on a constable, and was caned by a brutal tutor for giving a ball in the attic story of the college to some gay youths and damsels of the city.

While Oliver was leading at Dublin a life divided between squalid distress and squalid dissipation, his father died, leaving a mere pittance. The youth obtained his bachelor's degree, and left the university. During some time the humble dwelling to which his widowed mother had retired was his home. He was now in his twenty-first year; it was necessary that he should do something; and his education seemed to have fitted him to do nothing but to dress himself in gaudy colors, of which he was as fond as a magpie, to take a hand at cards, to sing Irish airs, to play the flute, to angle in summer, and to tell ghost stories by the fire in winter. He tried five or six professions in turn without success. He applied for ordination; but, as he applied in scarlet clothes, he was speedily turned out of the episcopal palace. He then became tutor in an opulent family, but soon quitted his situation in consequence of a dispute about play. Then he determined to emigrate to America. His relations, with much satisfaction, set him out for Cork on a good horse, with thirty pounds in his pocket. But in six weeks he came back on a miserable hack, without a penny, and informed his mother that the ship in which he had taken his passage, having got a fair wind while he was at a party of pleasure, had sailed without him. Then he resolved to study the law. A generous kinsman advanced fifty pounds. With this sum Goldsmith went to Dublin, was enticed into a gaming-house, and lost every shilling. He then thought of medicine. A small purse was made up; and in his twenty-fourth year he was sent to Edinburgh. At Edinburgh he passed eighteen months in nominal attendance on lectures, and picked up some superficial information about chemistry and natural history. Thence he went to Leyden, still pretending to study physic. He left that celebrated university, the third university at which he had resided, in his twenty-seventh year, without a degree, with the merest smattering of medical knowledge, and

with no property but his clothes and his flute. His flute, however, proved a useful friend. He rambled on foot through Flanders, France, and Switzerland, playing tunes which everywhere set the peasantry dancing, and which often procured for him a supper and a bed. He wandered as far as Italy. His musical performances, indeed, were not to the taste of the Italians; but he contrived to live on the alms which he obtained at the gates of convents. It should, however, be observed, that the stories which he told about this part of his life ought to be received with great caution; for strict veracity was never one of his virtues; and a man who is ordinarily inaccurate in narration is likely to be more than ordinarily inaccurate when he talks about his own travels. Goldsmith, indeed, was so regardless of truth as to assert in print that he was present at a most interesting conversation between Voltaire and Fontenelle, and that this conversation took place at Paris. Now it is certain that Voltaire never was within a hundred leagues of Paris during the whole time which Goldsmith passed on the continent.

In 1756 the wanderer landed at Dover, without a shilling, without a friend, and without a calling. He had, indeed, if his own unsupported evidence may be trusted, obtained from the University of Padua, a doctor's degree; but this dignity proved utterly useless to him. In England his flute was not in request; there were no convents; and he was forced to have recourse to a series of desperate expedients. He turned strolling player; but his face and figure were ill suited to the boards of the humblest theatre. He pounded drugs and ran about London with phials for charitable chemists. He joined a swarm of beggars which made its nest in Axe Yard. He was for a time usher of a school, and felt the miseries and humiliations of this situation so keenly, that he thought it a promotio to be permitted to earn his bread as a bookseller's h ; but he soon

found the new yoke more galling than the old one, and was glad to become an usher again. He obtained a medical appointment in the service of the East India Company; but the appointment was speedily revoked. Why it was revoked we are not told. The subject was one on which he never liked to talk. It is probable that he was incompetent to perform the duties of the place. Then he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination, as mate to a naval hospital. Even to so humble a post he was found unequal. By this time the schoolmaster whom he had served for a morsel of food and the third part of a bed, was no more. Nothing remained but to return to the lowest drudgery of literature. Goldsmith took a garret in a miserable court, to which he had to climb from the brink of Fleet Ditch by a dizzy ladder of flagstones called Breakneck Steps. The court and the ascent have long disappeared; but old Londoners well remember both. Here, at thirty, the unlucky adventurer sat down to toil like a galley-slave.

In the succeeding six years he sent to the press some things which have survived, and many which have perished. He produced articles for reviews, magazines, and newspapers; children's books which, bound in gilt paper and adorned with hideous wood-cuts, appeared in the window of the once far-famed shop at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard; *An Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe*, which, though of little or no value, is still reprinted among his works; a *Life of Beau Nash*, which is not reprinted, though it well deserves to be so; a superficial and incorrect, but very readable *History of England*, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a nobleman to his son; and some very lively and amusing *Sketches of London Society*, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a Chinese traveller to his friends. All these works were anonymous; but some of them were well known

to be Goldsmith's; and he gradually rose in the estimation of the booksellers for whom he drudged. He was indeed emphatically a popular writer. For accurate research or grave disquisition he was not well qualified by nature or by education. He knew nothing accurately: his reading had been desultory; nor had he meditated deeply on what he had read. He had seen much of the world; but he had noticed and retained little more of what he had seen, than some grotesque incidents and characters which had happened to strike his fancy. But though his mind was very scantily stored with materials, he used what materials he had in such a way as to produce a wonderful effect. There have been many greater writers; but perhaps no writer was ever more uniformly agreeable. His style was always pure and easy, and, on proper occasions, pointed and energetic. His narratives were always amusing, his descriptions always picturesque, his humor rich and joyous, yet not without an occasional tinge of amiable sadness. About every thing that he wrote, serious or sportive, there was a certain natural grace and decorum, hardly to be expected from a man a great part of whose life had been passed among thieves and beggars, street-walkers and merry-andrews, in those squalid dens which are the reproach of great capitals.

As his name gradually became known, the circle of his acquaintance widened. He was introduced to Johnson, who was then considered as the first of living English writers; to Reynolds, the first of English painters; and to Burke, who had not yet entered parliament, but had distinguished himself greatly by his writings and by the eloquence of his conversation. With these eminent men Goldsmith became intimate. In 1763, he was one of the nine original members of that celebrated fraternity which has sometimes been called the Literary Club, but which has always disclaimed that epithet, and still glories in the simple name of The Club.

By this time Goldsmith had quitted his miserable dwelling at the top of Breakneck Steps, and had taken chambers in the more civilized region of the Inns of Court. But he was still often reduced to pitiable shifts. Towards the close of 1764 his rent was so long in arrear, that his landlady one morning called in the help of a sheriff's officer. The debtor, in great perplexity, despatched a message to Johnson; and Johnson always friendly, though often surly, sent back the messenger with a guinea, and promised to follow speedily. He came and found that Goldsmith had changed the guinea, and was railing at the landlady over a bottle of Madeira. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and entreated his friend to consider calmly how money was to be procured. Goldsmith said that he had a novel ready for the press. Johnson glanced at the manuscript, saw that there were good things in it, took it to a bookseller, sold it for 60*l.* and soon returned with the money. The rent was paid and the sheriff's officer withdrawn. According to one story, Goldsmith gave his landlady a sharp reprimand for her treatment of him; according to another he insisted on her joining him in a bowl of punch. Both stories are probably true. The novel which was thus ushered into the world was the *Vicar of Wakefield.*

But before the *Vicar of Wakefield* appeared in print, came the great crisis of Goldsmith's literary life. In Christmas week, 1764, he published a poem entitled *The Traveller.* It was the first work to which he had put his name; and it at once raised him to the rank of a legitimate English classic. The opinion of the most skilful critics was, that nothing finer had appeared in verse since the fourth book of the *Dunciad.* In one respect the *Traveller* differs from all Goldsmith's other writings. In general his designs were bad, and his execution good. In the *Traveller,* the execution, though deserving of much praise, is far inferior to the design. No philosophical poem, ancient or

modern, has a plan so noble, and at the same time so simple. An English wanderer, seated on a crag among the Alps, near the point where three great countries meet, looks down on the boundless prospect, reviews his long pilgrimage, recalls the varieties of scenery, of climate, of government, of religion, of national character, which he has observed, and comes to the conclusion, just or unjust, that our happiness depends little on political institutions, and much on the temper and regulation of our own minds.

While the fourth edition of the *Traveller* was on the counters of the booksellers, the *Vicar of Wakefield* appeared, and rapidly obtained a popularity which has lasted down to our own time, and which is likely to last as long as our language. The fable is indeed one of the worst that ever was constructed. It wants, not merely that probability which ought to be found in a tale of common English life, but that consistency which ought to be found even in the wildest fiction about witches, giants, and fairies. But the earlier chapters have all the sweetness of pastoral poetry, together with all the vivacity of comedy. Moses and his spectacles, the vicar and his monogamy, the sharper and his cosmogony, the squire proving from Aristotle that relatives are related, Olivia preparing herself for the arduous task of converting a rakish lover by studying the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday, the great ladies with their scandal about Sir Tomkyn's amours and Dr. Burdock's verses, and Mr. Burchell with his "Fudge," have caused as much harmless mirth as has ever been caused by matter packed into so small a number of pages. The latter part of the tale is unworthy of the beginning. As we approach the catastrophe the absurdities lie thicker and thicker, and the gleams of pleasantry become rarer and rarer.

The success which had attended Goldsmith as a novelist emboldened him to try his fortune as a dramatist. He

wrote the *Good-natured Man*, a piece which had a worse fate than it deserved. Garrick refused to produce it at Drury Lane. It was acted at Covent Garden in 1768, but was coldly received. The author, however, cleared by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright, no less than 500*l.*, five times as much as he had made by the *Traveller* and the *Vicar of Wakefield* together. The plot of the *Good-natured Man* is, like almost all Goldsmith's plots, very ill constructed. But some passages are exquisitely ludicrous; much more ludicrous indeed, than suited the taste of the town at that time. A canting, mawkish play, entitled *False Delicacy*, had just had an immense run. Sentimentality was all the mode. During some years, more tears were shed at comedies than at tragedies; and a pleasantry which moved the audience to any thing more than a grave smile was reprobated as low. It is not strange, therefore, that the very best scene in the *Good-natured Man*, that in which Miss Richland finds her lover attended by the bailiff and the bailiff's follower in full court dresses, should have been mercilessly hissed, and should have been omitted after the first night.

In 1770 appeared the *Deserted Village*. In mere diction and versification this celebrated poem is fully equal, perhaps superior, to the *Traveller*; and it is generally preferred to the *Traveller* by that large class of readers who think, with Bayes in the *Rehearsal*, that the only use of a plan is to bring in fine things. More discerning judges, however, while they admire the beauty of the details, are shocked by one unpardonable fault which pervades the whole. The fault which we mean is not that theory about wealth and luxury which has so often been censured by political economists. The theory is indeed false: but the poem, considered merely as a poem, is not necessarily the worse on that account. The finest poem in the Latin language, indeed, the finest didactic poem in any language, was written

in defence of the silliest and meanest of all systems of natural and moral philosophy. A poet may easily be pardoned for reasoning ill; but he cannot be pardoned for describing ill, for observing the world in which he lives so carelessly that his portraits bear no resemblance to the originals, for exhibiting as copies from real life monstrous combinations of things which never were and never could be found together. What would be thought of a painter who should mix August and January in one landscape, who should introduce a frozen river into a harvest scene? Would it be a sufficient defence of such a picture to say that every part was exquisitely colored, that the green hedges, the apple-trees loaded with fruit, the wagons reeling under the yellow sheaves, and the sunburned reapers wiping their foreheads were very fine, and that the ice, and the boys sliding were also very fine? To such a picture the *Deserted Village* bears a great resemblance. It is made up of incongruous parts. The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries, and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity, as his *Auburn*. He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent; the ejectment he had probably seen in Munster; but by joining the two he has produced something which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world.

In 1773, Goldsmith tried his chance at Covent Garden with a second play, *She Stoops to Conquer*. The manager was not without great difficulty induced to bring this piece out. The sentimental comedy still reigned, and Goldsmith's

comedies were not sentimental. The *Good-natured Man* had been too funny to succeed; yet the mirth of the *Good-natured Man* was sober when compared with the rich drollery of *She Stoops to Conquer*, which is, in truth, an incomparable farce in five acts. On this occasion, however, genius triumphed. Pit, boxes, and galleries were in a constant roar of laughter. If any bigoted admirer of Kelley and Cumberland ventured to hiss or groan, he was speedily silenced by a general cry of "turn him out" or "throw him over." Two generations have since confirmed the verdict which was pronounced on that night.

While Goldsmith was writing the *Deserted Village* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, he was employed on works of a very different kind, works from which he derived little reputation but much profit. He compiled for the use of schools a *History of Rome*, by which he made 300*l.*, a *History of England* by which he made 600*l.*, a *History of Greece* for which he received 250*l.*, a *Natural History* for which the booksellers covenanted to pay him eight hundred guineas. These works he produced without any elaborate research, by merely selecting, abridging, and translating into his own clear, pure, and flowing language, what he found in books well known to the world, but too bulky or too dry for boys and girls. He committed some strange blunders; for he knew nothing with accuracy. Thus in his *History of England* he tells us that Naseby is in Yorkshire; nor did he correct this mistake when the book was reprinted. He was very nearly hoaxed into putting into the *History of Greece* an account of a battle between Alexander the Great and Montezuma. In his *Animated Nature* he relates, with faith and with perfect gravity, all the most absurd lies which he could find in books of travels about gigantic Patagonians, monkeys that preach sermons, nightingales that repeat long conversations. "If he can tell a horse from a cow," said Johnson, "that is the extent of his knowledge of zoölogy." How little Goldsmith

was qualified to write about the physical sciences is sufficiently proved by two anecdotes. He on one occasion denied that the sun is longer in the northern than in the southern signs. It was vain to cite the authority of Maupertuis. "Maupertuis!" he cried, "I understand those matters better than Maupertuis." On another occasion he, in defiance of the evidence of his own senses, maintained obstinately, and even angrily, that he chewed his dinner by moving his upper jaw.

Yet ignorant as Goldsmith was, few writers have done more to make the first steps in the laborious road to knowledge easy and pleasant. His compilations are widely distinguished from the compilations of ordinary bookmakers. He was a great, perhaps an unequalled master of the arts of selection and condensation. In these respects his histories of Rome and of England, and still more his own abridgments of these histories, well deserved to be studied. In general nothing is less attractive than an epitome; but the epitomes of Goldsmith, even when most concise, are always amusing; and to read them is considered by intelligent children, not as a task but as a pleasure.

Goldsmith might now be considered as a prosperous man. He had the means of living in comfort, and even in what to one who had so often slept in barns and on bulks must have been luxury. His fame was great and was constantly rising. He lived in what was intellectually far the best society of the kingdom, in a society in which no talent or accomplishment was wanting, and in which the art of conversation was cultivated with splendid success. There probably were never four talkers more admirable in four different ways than Johnson, Burke, Beauclerk, and Garrick; and Goldsmith was on terms of intimacy with all four. He aspired to share in their colloquial renown; but never was ambition more unfortunate. It may seem strange that a man who wrote with so much perspicuity, vivacity, and grace, should

have been, whenever he took part in conversation, an empty, noisy, blundering rattle.) But on this point the evidence is overwhelming. So extraordinary was the contrast between Goldsmith's published works and the silly things which he said, that Horace Walpole described him as an inspired idiot. "Noll," said Garrick, "wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Pol." Chamier declared that it was a hard exercise of faith to believe that so foolish a chatterer could have really written the *Traveller*. Even Boswell could say, with contemptuous compassion, that he liked very well to hear honest Goldsmith run on. "Yes, sir," said Johnson, "but he should not like to hear himself." Minds differ as rivers differ. There are transparent and sparkling rivers from which it is delightful to drink as they flow; to such rivers the minds of such men as Burke and Johnson may be compared. But there are rivers of which the water when first drawn is turbid and noisome, but becomes pellucid as crystal, and delicious to the taste if it be suffered to stand till it has deposited a sediment; and such a river is a type of the mind of Goldsmith. His first thoughts on every subject were confused even to absurdity, but they required only a little time to work themselves clear. When he wrote they had that time; and therefore his readers pronounced him a man of genius; but when he talked, he talked nonsense, and made himself the laughing-stock of his hearers. He was painfully sensible of his inferiority in conversation; he felt every failure keenly; yet he had not sufficient judgment and self-command to hold his tongue. His animal spirits and vanity were always impelling him to do the one thing which he could not do. After every attempt he felt that he had exposed himself, and writhed with shame and vexation; yet the next moment he began again.

His associates seem to have regarded him with kindness, which in spite of their admiration of his writings, was not unmixed with contempt. In truth, there was in his charac-

ter much to love, but very little to respect. His heart was soft even to weakness; he was so generous that he quite forgot to be just; he forgave injuries so readily that he might be said to invite them, and was so liberal to beggars, that he had nothing left for his tailor and his butcher. He was vain, sensual, frivolous, profuse, improvident. One vice of a darker shade was imputed to him, envy. But there is not the least reason to believe that this bad passion, though it sometimes made him wince and utter fretful exclamations, ever impelled him to injure by wicked arts the reputation of any of his rivals. The truth probably is, that he was not more envious, but merely less prudent than his neighbors. His heart was on his lips. All those small jealousies, which are but too common among men of letters, but which a man of letters who is also a man of the world, does his best to conceal, Goldsmith avowed with the simplicity of a child. When he was envious, instead of affecting indifference, instead of damning with faint praise, instead of doing injuries slyly and in the dark, he told everybody that he was envious. "Do not, pray, do not talk of Johnson in such terms," he said to Boswell; "you harrow up my very soul." George Steevens and Cumberland were men far too cunning to say such a thing. They would have echoed the praises of the man whom they envied, and then have sent to the newspapers anonymous libels upon him. But what was good and what was bad in Goldsmith's character was to his associates a perfect security that he would never commit such villany. He was neither ill-natured enough, nor long-headed enough, to be guilty of any malicious act which required contrivance and disguise.

Goldsmith has sometimes been represented as a man of genius, cruelly treated by the world, and doomed to struggle with difficulties, which at last broke his heart. But no representation can be more remote from the truth. He did, indeed, go through much sharp misery before he had done

any thing considerable in literature. But after his name had appeared on the title-page of the *Traveller*, he had none but himself to blame for his distresses. His average income, during the last seven years of his life, certainly exceeded 400*l.* a year, and 400*l.* a year ranked, among the incomes of that day, as high as 800*l.* a year would rank at present. A single man living in the Temple, with 400*l.* a year, might then be called opulent. Not one in ten of the young gentlemen of good families who were studying the law there had so much. But all the wealth which Lord Clive had brought from Bengal, and Sir Lawrence Dundas from Germany, joined together, would not have sufficed for Goldsmith. He spent twice as much as he had. He wore fine clothes, gave dinners of several courses, paid court to venal beauties. He had also, it should be remembered, to the honor of his heart, though not of his head, a guinea, or five, or ten, according to the state of his purse, ready for any tale of distress, true or false. But it was not in dress or feasting, in promiscuous amours or promiscuous charities, that his chief expense lay. He had been from boyhood a gambler, and at once the most sanguine and the most unskilful of gamblers. For a time he put off the day of inevitable ruin by temporary expedients. He obtained advances from booksellers by promising to execute works which he never began. But at length this source of supply failed. He owed more than 2000*l.*; and he saw no hope of extrication from his embarrassments. His spirits and health gave way. He was attacked by a nervous fever, which he thought himself competent to treat. It would have been happy for him if his medical skill had been appreciated as justly by himself as by others. Notwithstanding the degree which he pretended to have received at Padua, he could procure no patients. "I do not practise," he once said; "I make it a rule to prescribe only for my friends." "Pray, dear Doctor," said Beauclerk, "alter your rule; and pre-

scribe only for your enemies." Goldsmith now, in spite of this excellent advice, prescribed for himself. The remedy aggravated the malady. The sick man was induced to call in real physicians; and they at one time imagined that they had cured the disease. Still his weakness and restlessness continued. He could get no sleep. He could take no food. "You are worse," said one of his medical attendants, "than you should be from the degree of fever which you have. Is your mind at ease?" "No, it is not," were the last recorded words of Oliver Goldsmith. He died on the third of April, 1774, in his forty-sixth year. He was laid in the churchyard of the Temple; but the spot was not marked by any inscription, and is now forgotten. The coffin was followed by Burke and Reynolds. Both these great men were sincere mourners. Burke, when he heard of Goldsmith's death, burst into a flood of tears. Reynolds had been so much moved by the news, that he flung aside his brush and palette for the day.

A short time after Goldsmith's death, a little poem appeared, which will, as long as our language lasts, associate the names of his two illustrious friends with his own. It has already been mentioned that he sometimes felt keenly the sarcasm which his wild blundering talk brought upon him. He was, not long before his illness, provoked into retaliating. He wisely betook himself to his pen; and at that weapon he proved himself a match for all his assailants together. Within a small compass he drew with a singularly easy and vigorous pencil, the characters of nine or ten of his intimate associates. Though this little work did not receive his last touches, it must always be regarded as a masterpiece. It is impossible, however, not to wish that four or five likenesses which have no interest for posterity were wanting to that noble gallery, and that their places were supplied by sketches of Johnson and Gibbon, as happy and vivid as the sketches of Burke and Garrick

Some of Goldsmith's friends and admirers honored him with a cenotaph in Westminster Abbey. Nollekins was the sculptor; and Johnson wrote the inscription. It is much to be lamented that Johnson did not leave to posterity a more durable and a more valuable memorial of his friend. A life of Goldsmith would have been an inestimable addition to the Lives of the Poets. No man appreciated Goldsmith's writings more justly than Johnson; no man was better acquainted with Goldsmith's character and habits; and no man was more competent to delineate with truth and spirit the peculiarities of a mind in which great powers were found in company with great weaknesses. But the list of poets to whose works Johnson was requested by the booksellers to furnish prefaces, ended with Lyttelton, who died in 1773. The line seems to have been drawn expressly for the purpose of excluding the person whose portrait would have most fitly closed the series. Goldsmith, however, has been fortunate in his biographers. Within a few years his life has been written by Mr. Prior, by Mr. Washington Irving, and by Mr. Forster. The diligence of Mr. Prior deserves great praise; the style of Mr. Washington Irving is always pleasing; but the highest place must, in justice, be assigned to the eminently interesting work of Mr. Forster.

EDWARD GIBBON.

EDWARD GIBBON, one of the most celebrated historians of any age or country, was also his *own* historian. He has left us one of the most piquant autobiographies ever written. In the following sketch the chief incidents of his life will be condensed from that authentic source; for more than *facts*, even for the *setting* of these, it would be unwise to trust to any man's autobiography — though Gibbon's is as frank as most. There are points on which vanity will say too much, and perhaps others on which modesty will say too little.

Gibbon was descended, he tells us, from a Kentish family, ancient, though not illustrious. His grandfather was a man of ability, and an enterprising merchant of London; one of the commissioners of customs in the latter years of Queen Anne; and, in the judgment of Lord Bolingbroke, as deeply versed in the "finance and commerce of England" as any man of his time. He was not always wise, however, either for himself or his country; for he became deeply involved in the South Sea scheme, and lost the ample wealth he had amassed, at the explosion of that tremendous bubble (1720). As a director of the company, he was suspected of fraudulent complicity, was taken into custody, and heavily fined; but £10,000 were allowed him out of the wreck of his £60,000, and with this his skill and enterprise soon constructed

a second fortune.[1] He died at Putney in 1736, leaving the bulk of his property to his two daughters — nearly disinheriting his only son, the father of the historian, for having married against his wishes. This son (by name Edward) was educated at Westminster and Cambridge, but never took a degree; travelled, became member of parliament, first for Petersfield, then for Southampton; joined the party against Sir Robert Walpole, and (as his son confesses, not much to his father's honor) was animated in so doing by "private revenge," against the supposed "oppressor" of his family in the South Sea affair. If so, revenge, as usual, was blind; for Walpole sought rather to moderate than inflame public feeling against the projectors.

His celebrated son was born at Putney, Surrey, 27th of April, 1737. His mother was the daughter of a London merchant. Gibbon was the eldest of a family of six sons and a daughter, yet was the only one who survived childhood; and his own life in youth hung by so mere a thread as to be a thousand times despaired of. His mother, between domestic cares and constant infirmities (which, however, did not prevent an occasional plunge into fashionable dissipation in compliance with her husband's wishes), did but little for him. His *true* mother, if the expression may be permitted, was his maiden aunt — Catherine Porten by name — who tenderly nursed his infancy, and, whenever his feeble health allowed, took care that his mind should not be neglected. "Many anxious and solitary days," says Gibbon,

[1] No less than three of the family intermarried with the Actons of Shropshire. "I am thus connected," says Gibbon, "by a triple alliance with t' ' ancient and loyal family of Shropshire baronets. It consisted about that time of seven brothers, all of gigantic stature; one of whom, a pigmy of six feet, two inches, confessed himself the last and least of the seven; adding, in the true spirit of party, that such men were not born since the revolution." — *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 10.

"did she consume with patient trial of every mode of relief and amusement. Many wakeful nights did she sit by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last." [1] At seven he was committed for eighteen months to the care of a private tutor, John Kirkby by name, and the author, among other things, of a "philosophical fiction" entitled the *Life of Automathes*. The illustrious pupil speaks gratefully of his tutor, and doubtless truly, so far as he could trust the impressions of his childhood. Of the "philosophical fiction" he says, "The author is not entitled to the merit of invention since he has blended the English story of *Robinson Crusoe* with the Arabian romance of *Hai Ebn Yokhdan* which he might have read in the Latin version of Pococke. In the *Automathes* I cannot praise either the depth of thought or elegance of style; but the book is not devoid of entertainment or instruction." [2]

At nine (1746), during a "lucid interval of health," he was sent to a school at Kingston-on-Thames; but the usual breaks of sickness intervened, and his progress, by his own confession, was slow and unsatisfactory. "My timid reserve was astonished by the crowd and tumult of the school; the want of strength and activity disqualified me for the sports of the play-field. . . . . By the common methods of discipline, at the expense of many tears and some blood, I purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax; and not long since I was possessed of the dirty volumes of *Phædrus* and *Cornelius Nepos* which I painfully construed and darkly understood." [3]

In 1747 his mother died, and he was taken home. After a short time his father removed from Putney to the "rustic solitude" of Buriton, and young Gibbon accompanied him. There probably his health was benefited, and his mind certainly received its first decided stimulus. In these early years, under the care of his devoted aunt, he

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 19. [2] Ib. p. 21, 22. [3] Ib. p. 22.

first acquired, he tells us, that passionate love of reading "which he would not exchange for all the treasures of India." He read at will; and there are minds to which it is the best possible schooling. To be turned loose to graze in the free mountain pasture, to "browse" at pleasure — as Charles Lamb expresses it — in a library of wholesome literature, tends more than any thing else, if not to discipline, to stimulate their powers; and often not only tinctures, but determines the whole future. It was so with Gibbon. After detailing the circumstances which "unlocked" for him the door of his grandfather's "tolerable library," he says, "I turned over many English pages of poetry and romance, of history and travels. Where a title attracted my eye, without fear or awe I snatched the volume from the shelf."[1] In 1749, in his twelfth year, he was sent to Westminster, still residing, however, with his aunt, who, unwilling to live a life of dependence, had opened a boarding-house for Westminster school. "In the space of two years (1749–50), interrupted by danger and debility, I painfully climbed into the third form; and my riper age was left to acquire the beauties of the Latin and the rudiments of the Greek tongue."[2] The continual attacks of sickness which had retarded his progress induced his aunt, by medical advice, to take him to Bath; but the mineral waters had no effect. He then resided for a time in the house of a physician in Winchester; the physician did as little as the mineral waters; and, after a further trial of Bath, he once more returned to Putney, and made a last futile attempt to study at Westminster. Finally, it was resolved that he would never be able to encounter the discipline of a school; and casual instructors, at various times and places, were provided for him. The snatches of his youth that could be given to mental effort were doubtless pretty well filled up by himself, and, for the reasons already as-

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 25. [2] Ib. p. 27.

signed, perhaps not unpropitiously in relation to the peculiar character of his intellect and the requirements of his subsequent career.

Towards his sixteenth year he tells us that all his infirmities suddenly vanished. "Nature," as he frigidly expresses it, "displayed in my favor her mysterious energies." His education was now resumed under the roof of Francis, the translator of Horace; of whose negligence as a tutor the historian speaks most strongly. "The translator of Horace," says he, "might have taught me to relish the Latin poets, had not my friends discovered in a few weeks that he preferred the pleasures of London to the instruction of his pupils." [1]

Gibbon was then sent to *finish* his education (before it had been properly *begun*) at Oxford, where he matriculated as gentleman commoner of Magdalen College, April, 1752. His description of his intellectual condition at that time is curious enough: "I arrived there with a stock of erudition which might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy might have been ashamed." It was natural. He had read extensively, though at random; and, his memory being tenacious, he had amassed much knowledge, though of a very miscellaneous character. It seems, however, that during the three previous years his youthful mind had received a determinate direction, either from its own secret tendencies, or from the class of works on which he accidentally lighted, or more probably from both causes. His taste was already fixed where it never afterwards wavered — on *history*.

His list of the books which, during the three years of self-prompted and wandering study, he had more or less devoured, is amazingly miscellaneous; but we have no space to give it. The reader may find it in the *Memoirs*. Many of them both for their extent and dryness, would have been

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 28.

repulsive enough to most lads of his age. Most of the classical historians accessible in translations, not forgetting a "ragged *Procopius*" which chanced to fall in his way, and "many crude lumps," as he oddly expresses it, of the most voluminous modern historians, as Davila, Rapin, Father Paul, Machiavel, were hastily gulped — giving in those days, doubtless, but little trouble in the digestion. "I devoured them," he says, "like so many novels; and I swallowed with the same voracious appetite the description of India and China, of Mexico and Peru."[1] At the same period his fancy kindled with the first glimpses into oriental history, the wild "barbaric" charm of which he never ceased to feel. India, China, Arabia, and especially the career of Mohammed, successively attracted his attention. Ockley's book on the Saracens "first opened his eyes" to this last subject; and with his characteristic ardor of literary research, he forthwith plunged into the French of D'Herbelot, and the Latin of Pococke's version of *Abulfaragius* — sometimes "guessing," and sometimes understanding — now swimming, now wading up to his chin, and now plunging out of his depth altogether. His first introduction to the historic scenes which afterwards formed the passion of his life, took place at the same period. In 1751, he notes his "discovery" of a "common book" — Echard's *Roman History*.[2] "To me," he says, "the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new; and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube, when the summons of the dinner bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast."

He seems even then to have adopted the plan of study he followed in after-life and recommended in his *Essai sur l'Etude;* that is, of letting his subject rather than his author determine his course; of suspending the perusal of a book to reflect, and to compare the statements with those of other

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 30. [2] Ib. p. 30.

authors; so that he often read portions of fifty volumes while mastering one. Where the mind has vigor and perseverance to adopt this course, it is, without doubt, the most profitable of all modes of reading. A man rarely forgets what he has taken so much trouble to acquire. The chase itself, too, and the variety of forms in which knowledge is presented, afford a thousand links by which association aids memory.

But Gibbon's huge wallet of scraps stood him in little stead at the trim banquets to which he was invited at Oxford; and the wandering habit by which he had filled it absolutely unfitted him to be a guest. He was not well grounded in any of the elementary branches which are essential to university studies, and to all success in their prosecution. It was natural, therefore, that he should dislike the university, and as natural that the university should dislike him. Many of his complaints of the *system* were certainly just; but it may be doubted whether *any* university system would have been profitable to him, considering his antecedents. He complains of his tutors, too, and in one case with abundant reason; but, by his own confession, they had equal reason to complain of him, for he indulged in gay society, and kept late hours. His observations, however, on the defects of our university system in general, are acute and well worth pondering, however little relevant to his own case. Many of these defects, in the case of our own universities, have been removed since his time, and some very recently. He remained at Magdalen about fourteen months. "To the University of Oxford," he says, "I acknowledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable in my whole life.[1]

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 34.

But little as he did as a student, he already meditated authorship. In the first long *vacation* — "during which," he says, (whimsically enough,) "his taste for books began to revive," — he resolved to write a treatise on *The Age of Sesostris*;[1] in which (and it was characteristic) his chief object was to investigate the probable epoch of that semi-mythical monarch's reign. "Unprovided with original learning, uninformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved to write a book." He long afterwards (November, 1772), but wisely, no doubt, "committed the sheets to the flames." Literary ambition almost uniformly displays its early energy in some such crude project, and Gibbon was no exception to the rule. This period of his life was also signalized by another premature attempt to solve difficulties beyond the age of sixteen. He read Middleton's *Free Inquiry*; and this, strange to say, *repelled* him from Protestantism, and gave him a bias towards Rome; he read Bossuet's *Variations of Protestantism*, and *Exposition of Catholic Doctrine*, and these completed his conversion, "and surely," he adds, "I fell by a noble hand." In this notable victory, however, of the Bishop of Meaux over a youth of sixteen, there is nothing wonderful; nor was Bossuet the only champion of Rome who helped to lay him low, for he attributes not a little to the perusal of the works of Parsons, the Jesuit. But the inexperience, perhaps waywardness of youth, and impatience to have doubts hushed and quelled, if not removed, had probably more to do with this transient conquest, than all the above controvertists put together.

No sooner converted, than he confessed. He certainly practised none of the *reserve* of the Jesuit to whom he had been so much indebted. On June 8, 1753, he records that he "privately abjured the heresies" of his childhood before

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 41.

a Catholic priest in London, and announced the same to his father in a somewhat grandiloquent effusion, which his spiritual adviser much approved, and in which it is probable he had some share. "Gibbon," says Lord Sheffield, "described the letter to his father, announcing his conversion, as written with all the pomp, the dignity, and self-satisfaction of a martyr."[1] His father heard with indignant surprise of this act of juvenile apostasy, and indiscreetly giving vent to his wrath, the authorities of Oxford dismissed the neophyte. It is curious to read Gibbon's rather complacent estimate in after-life of this "sacrifice of self-interest to conscience." It is expressed in terms which might almost tempt one to think that he scarcely contemplated his subsequent changes with equal satisfaction. Yet he also seems to have felt that the infirmities of reason which this escapade implied needed some apology, and that the applause of conscience hardly compensated for the reflections on his logic. He therefore justifies his apostasy by the parallel vacillations of Chillingworth and Bayle. "He could not blush," he says, "that his *tender* mind was entangled in the sophistry which had seduced the acute and manly understandings of a Chillingworth or a Bayle;"[2] of which he takes care to inform us that the latter was *twenty-two*, and the former of the "ripe age" of twenty-eight years, when caught in the meshes of Romanism.

In short, he attached rather too much importance to the fluctuations of sixteen. As a fact in the history of his own mind, however, it is of interest; in any other light, of no importance whatever. "To my present feelings," he tells us in his *Memoirs*, "it seems *incredible* that I should ever believe that I believed in transubstantiation," that is if he were interpreted rigorously, "he could not *believe* that he could ever *believe* that he *believed* in transubstantiation." If that were his meaning, he had certainly cured himself of all superfluous facility of belief.

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 46. [2] Ib. p. 47.

It was now high time that his education, so nearly finished in name, should be begun in earnest. But as one chief object of his father was to secure in the course of it his reconversion to Protestantism, he was consigned (1753) to the care of a Calvinist minister at Lausanne — a M. Pavilliard, of whom Gibbon speaks in strong terms of affection and esteem, and who appears to have deserved them. There was one slight obstacle to be sure, to the intercourse of tutor and pupil; M. Pavilliard appears to have known little of English, and young Gibbon knew nothing of French. But this difficulty was soon removed by the pupil's diligence; the very exigencies of his situation were of service to him, and he studied the language with such success, that at the close of his five years' exile he declares that he "spontaneously thought" in French rather than in English, and that it had become more familiar to "ear, pen, and tongue." It is well known that in after years he had doubts whether he should not compose his great work in French; and it is certain that his familiarity with that language, in spite of considerable efforts to counteract its effects, tinged his style to the last.

Under the judicious regulations of his new tutor a systematic course of study was marked out, and was most ardently prosecuted. The pupil's progress was proportionably rapid. With the systematic study of the Latin and Greek classics he conjoined that of French literature, which he read largely though somewhat indiscriminately.

Nor was the object his father primarily had at heart less effectually attained. To his large reading of the classics he added a diligent study of logic in the prolix system of Crousaz, and further invigorated his reasoning powers, as well as enlarged his knowledge of metaphysics and jurisprudence by the perusal of Locke, Grotius, and Montesquieu. He also read about this time Pascal's *Provincial Letters*, and at sixty he declares he had reperused them

almost every year with new pleasure. It is one of the "three books" which, by his own confession, probably contributed, in a "special sense, to form the historian of the *Roman Empire*." From Pascal, he flatters himself, he "learned to manage the weapons of grave and temperate irony, even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity;" a grand mistake as regards both the adroitness with which he used and the subject on which he employed the weapon. There is as much difference between the light grace of Pascal's irony and the heavy, labored movement of Gibbon's, as between an Arab courser and a Flanders war-horse. He also studied mathematics to some extent, though purely in compliance with his father's wishes. He advanced as far as the conic sections in the treatise of L'Hôpital. He assures us that his tutor did not complain of any inaptitude on the pupil's part, and that the pupil was as happily unconscious of any on his own; but here he broke off. He adds, what is not quite clear from one who so frankly acknowledges his limited acquaintance with the science, that he had reason to congratulate himself that he knew no more. "As soon," he says, "as I understood the principles, I relinquished forever the pursuit of the mathematics; nor can I lament that I desisted before my mind was hardened by the habit of rigid demonstration, so destructive of the finer feelings of moral evidence, which must, however, determine the actions and opinions of our lives."[1]

There is no doubt that the sort of evidence with which the future historian was called to deal has to do with probabilities and not rigid "demonstration;" but whether he would not have sometimes computed its elements with more impartiality and precision if he had had a little further training in the exact sciences, may be a question.

Under the new influences which were brought to bear on

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 66.

him, he resumed in less than a twelvemonth his Protestantism. "He is willing," he says, to allow M. Pavilliard a "handsome share in his reconversion," though he stoutly avows that it was principally due to his own "solitary reflections." He particularly congratulated himself on having discovered a "philosophical argument" against "transubstantiation." It was "that the text of Scripture which seems to inculcate the real presence is attested only by a *single* sense — our sight; while the real presence itself is disproved by *three* of our senses — the sight, the touch, and the taste."[1] It is possible that the unconscious influence of the threats of disinheritance, and the exchange of his "handsome apartments at Magdalen" for the meanness and discomforts of his Swiss home, may have been quite as efficacious as this curious enthymeme. Thus was he converted to Romanism in his sixteenth year, and recanted his recantation in his seventeenth. The changes were doubtless important to him, and it was natural that he should give them some prominence in his "autobiography;" but relatively to the great questions they involve, the oscillations of such a youthful mind, however intelligent, are of as little moment as the transfer of a cypher from one side of an equation to the other.

Two circumstances specially signalized his residence at Lausanne — he saw Voltaire, and he fell in love. "*Virgilium vidi tantum*," says he; but his admiration of Voltaire's writings was great, and exerted a rather equivocal influence on his poetic tastes. It led to an excessive estimate of the French drama, and abated, he scruples not to declare, his "idolatry for the gigantic genius of Shakspeare." Voltaire's writings also probably gave him a false bias in matters of infinitely more importance than those of literature.

His love affair — his first and only one — was transient

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 58.

enough. The young lady, in the bloom of sixteen, the daughter of a Swiss pastor, was Mademoiselle Curchod, afterwards the wife of the celebrated M. Necker. She was, as Gibbon declares (and we know it on better testimony than a lover's eyes), beautiful, intelligent, and accomplished. Her charms, however, do not seem to have made any indelible impression on our young student, whose sensibility, to say the truth, was never very profound. On his father's expressing his disapprobation, he surrendered the object of his affection with as little resistance as he had surrendered his Romanism. "I sighed," he says, "as a lover, but obeyed as a son." It would be invidious to institute comparisons as to the merit of "faithful love" and filial devotion; but, if the one be unrewarded by fortune, and the other stimulated by menaces, it is a difficult choice no doubt, for any but a hero; and Gibbon neither then nor afterwards was a hero. "Without my father's consent," he plaintively says, "I was destitute and helpless."

Unwearied application to study was the best "*remedium amoris*," if indeed he stood in need of any remedy. In any case, his diligence was most commendable, and no one can read the account of the three last years spent at Lausanne, and especially the all but incredible toils of the last eight months, without perceiving that the foundations of that vast erudition which the *Decline and Fall* demanded, were effectually laid; or hesitate to give our student a worthy place with the Scaligers, Huets, and Leibnitzes, of the preceding century. Though there may be a little unconscious exaggeration in his statement of the achievements of these miraculous eight months, we are tempted to give it in a note for the encouragement or despair of other youthful students.[1]

[1] He says in his *Journal*, December 4, 1755, — "In finishing this year, I must remark how favorable it was to my studies. In the space of eight months, from the beginning of April, I learned the principles of drawing; made myself complete master of the French

In 1758 he returned to England, and was kindly received at home. But he found a stepmother there; and this apparition on his father's hearth at first rather appalled him. The cordial and gentle manners of Mrs. Gibbon, however, and her unremitted study of his happiness, won him from his first prejudices, and gave her a permanent place both in his esteem and affection. He seems to have been much indulged, and led a very pleasant life of it; he pleased himself in moderate excursions, frequented the theatre, mingled, though not very often, in society; was sometimes a little extravagant, and sometimes a little dissipated, but never lost the benefits of his Lausanne exile; and with the exception of a few transient youthful irregularities, settled into a sober, discreet, calculating epicurean philosopher, who sought the *summum bonum* of man in temperate, regulated, and elevated pleasure. The two years after his return to England he spent principally at his father's country-seat at Buriton, in Hampshire, only nine months being given to the metropolis. He has left an amusing account of his employments in the country, where his love of study was at once inflamed by a library rich enough to make him contrast its treasures with the poverty of Lausanne, and checked by the necessary interruptions of his otherwise happy domestic life. After breakfast "he was expected," he says, "to spend an

and Latin languages, with which I was very superficially acquainted before, and wrote and translated a great deal in both; read Cicero's Epistles *Ad Familiares*, his *Brutus*, all his Orations, his Dialogues *De Amicitiâ* and *De Senectute;* Terence, twice; and Pliny's Epistles. In French, Giannone's *History of Naples*, and l'Abbé Bannier's *Mythology*, and M. De Bochat's *Memoires sur la Suisse*, and wrote a very ample relation of my tour. I likewise began to study Greek, and went through the grammar. I began to make very large collections of what I read. But what I esteem most of all, from the perusal and meditation of De Crousaz's *Logic*, I not only understood the principles of that science, but formed my mind to a habit of thinking and reasoning I had no idea of before." — *Memoirs*, p. 61.

hour with Mrs. Gibbon — read the paper to his father in the afternoon — was often called down to entertain idle visitors — and, worst of all, was periodically compelled to return the visits of their more distant neighbors." He says he dreaded the "recurrence of the full moon," which was the period generally selected for the more convenient accomplishment of such formidable excursions.

His father's library, though large in comparison with that he commanded at Lausanne, contained, he says, "much trash," which he gradually weeded out, and transformed it at length into that "numerous and select" library which was "the foundation of his works, and the best comfort of his life at home and abroad." No sooner had he returned home than he began the work of accumulation, and records that, on the receipt of his first quarter's allowance, a large share was appropriated to his literary wants. "He could never forget," he declares, "the joy with which he exchanged a bank-note of twenty pounds for the twenty volumes of the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions*." It may not be unprofitable here to remark that the principles on which he selected his admirable library are worthy of every student's attention. "I am not conscious," says he, "of having ever bought a book from a motive of ostentation; every volume before it was deposited on the shelf was either read or sufficiently examined." The account he gives of his *mode* of study is also deeply instructive, but there is not space for it here.

In London he seems to have seen but little select society — partly because his father's habits opened to him but little that he cared for — partly from his own reserve and timidity, increased by his foreign education. This had made English habits unfamiliar and the very language in some degree strange. And thus it was that he draws that interesting picture of the literary recluse among the crowds of London: "While coaches were rattling through Bond

Street, I have passed many a solitary evening in my lodging with my books. My studies were sometimes interrupted with a sigh, which I breathed towards *Lausanne;* and on the approach of spring I withdrew without reluctance from the noisy and extensive scene of crowds without company, and dissipation without pleasure."[1] He became acquainted, however, with Mallet — by courtesy called the "poet" — and through him gained access to Lady Hervey's circle, where a congenial admiration, not to say affectation, of French manners and literature, made him a welcome guest. In one respect Mallet gave him good counsel. He advised him to addict himself to an arduous study of the more idiomatic English writers — Swift and Addison, for example — with a view to unlearn his foreign idiom, and recover his half-forgotten vernacular; — a task, which he never perfectly accomplished. Much as he admired these writers, Hume and Robertson were still greater favorites, as well from their subject as for their style. Of his admiration of Hume's style — of its nameless grace of simple elegance — he has left us a strong expression, when he tells us that it often compelled him to close the historian's volumes with a feeling of despair.

In 1761 Gibbon, after many delays, and with many flutterings of hope and fear, gave to the world, in French, his maiden publication, composed two years before. It was partly in compliance with his father's wishes, who thought that the proof of some literary talent might introduce him favorably to public notice, and "secure the recommendation of his friends." But in yielding to paternal authority, Gibbon frankly owns that he complied, "like a pious son — with the wish of his own heart."

The subject of the *Essai sur l'etude de la Littérature* was suggested, its author says, by a refinement of vanity — "the

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 81.

desire of justifying and praising the object of a favorite pursuit." Partly owing to its being written in French, partly to its character, the essay excited more attention abroad than at home. Gibbon has criticized it with the utmost frankness, not to say severity, but after every abatement, it is unquestionably a surprising effort for a mind so young, and contains many thoughts which would not have disgraced a thinker or scholar of much maturer age. The account of its first reception and subsequent history in England deserves to be cited as amongst the curiosities of literature. "In England," he says, "it was received with cold indifference, little read, and speedily forgotten; a small impression was slowly dispersed; the bookseller murmured, and the author (had his feelings been more exquisite) might have wept over the blunders and baldness of the English translation. The publication of my history *fifteen years afterwards* revived the memory of my first performance, and the essay was eagerly sought in the shops. But I refused the permission which Becket solicited of reprinting it: the public curiosity was imperfectly satisfied by a pirated copy of the booksellers of Dublin; and when a copy of the original edition has been discovered in a sale, the primitive value of half a crown has risen to the fanciful price of a guinea or thirty shillings."[1]

Just before the publication of the essay, Gibbon entered a new, and, one might suppose, a very uncongenial scene of life. He became a captain in the Hampshire militia; and for more than two years led a life of march and countermarch in the southern counties of England. Hampshire, Kent, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, formed the successive theatres of what he calls his "bloodless and inglorious campaigns." He nevertheless, justly describes it as a life of "military servitude," as the term of service was prolonged

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 90.

far beyond the period he had contemplated, and the mode of life utterly alien from all his pursuits as a scholar and a student. "In the act," says he, "of offering our names and receiving our commissions, as major and captain in the Hampshire regiment (June 12, 1759), we had not supposed that we should be dragged away, my father from his farm, myself from my books, and condemned during two years and a half (May 10, 1760, to December 23, 1762), to a wandering life of military servitude."[1] He has left us an amusing account of the busy idleness in which his time was spent; but, considering the circumstances, so adverse to study, one is rather surprised that our military student should have done so much, than that he did so little;[2] and never probably before were so many hours of literary study spent in a tent. In estimating the comparative advantages and disadvantages of this wearisome period of his life, he has summed up with the sagacity of a man of the world, and the impartiality of a philosopher. Irksome as were his employments, grievous as was the waste of time, uncongenial as were his companions, solid benefits were to be set off against these things; his health became robust, his knowledge of the world was enlarged, he wore off some of his foreign idiom, got rid of much of his reserve; he adds, — and perhaps in his estimate it was the benefit to be most prized of all, — "the discipline and evolutions of a modern battalion gave me a clearer notion of the phalanx and the legion, and the captain of the Hampshire grenadiers (the

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 95.

[2] The notes of his *Journal* at this period are worth reading, as curiously illustrative of his indomitable literary industry. "My example," he says, "might prove that in the life most averse to study some hours may be stolen, some minutes may be snatched. Amidst the tumult of Winchester camp I sometimes thought and read in my tent; in the more settled quarters of the Devizes, Blandford, and Southampton, I always secured a separate lodging, and the necessary books." — *Ib.* p. 104.

reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire." In 1762, while the new militia was forming, he "enjoyed two or three months of literary repose," and flew to his books with an appetite sharpened by his long fast. In pursuing a plan of study at this period, he hesitated between the prosecution of mathematics and Greek; it was but for a moment. As might be anticipated, Homer carried the day against Newton and Leibnitz.

Nothing can better illustrate the intensity of Gibbon's literary ambition — his only strong passion — than the number of literary projects with which his mind was teeming even in camp. He enumerates amongst others a history of the expedition of Charles VIII. of France; the crusade of Richard the Lion-hearted; the wars of the barons; and lives of the Black Prince, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Montrose. These are only a portion of the subjects he revolved with the same view. They show by their number how strong was the impulse to literature, and by their character, how determined the bent of his mind in the direction of history.

The militia was disbanded in 1763, and he joyfully shook off his bonds; but his literary projects were still to be postponed. Following his own wishes, though with his father's consent, he had projected a continental tour as the completion "of an English gentleman's education." This had been interrupted by the episode of the militia. He now resumed his purpose and left England in 1763. Two years were "loosely defined as the term of his absence," which he exceeded by half a year — returning June, 1765. He first visited Paris, where he saw a good deal of D'Alembert, Diderot, Barthelemy, Raynal, Helvetius, Baron d'Holbach, and others of the same set; and was often a welcome guest in the saloons of Mesdames Geoffrin and Du Deffand.[1] Vol-

[1] This lady, though blind — "l'aveugle clairvoyante," as Voltaire happily calls her — recognized with exquisite tact the self-betraying

taire was at Geneva, Rousseau at Montmorency, and Buffon he neglected to visit; but the above names are enough to justify the suspicion that the hostility which he afterwards evinced towards Christianity may in part be attributed to the influence of such society. How well he liked Paris is evident from his own statements: "Fourteen weeks insensibly stole away; but had I been rich and independent, I should have prolonged and perhaps have fixed my residence at Paris."[1]

From France he proceeded to Switzerland, and revisited his friends at Lausanne; thence to Italy in 1764. The account of his feelings on approaching Rome — how like in intensity to those of Luther on a similar occasion, and yet of how different a character! — is deeply interesting. His emotions, he says, were not "enthusiastic," and yet became, as he confesses, almost "uncontrollable." While here, his long yearning for some great theme worthy of his historic genius was gratified. The first conception of the *Decline and Fall* arose as he lingered one evening amidst the vestiges of ancient glory; but his precise words cannot be omitted in any sketch of Gibbon, however brief: — "It was at Rome," says he, "on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." M. Suard fancifully attributes to the combination of circumstances under which the conception of the work arose, some of that inveterate hatred of Chris-

solicitude of Gibbon to catch the exact tone of French manners and society. She thus speaks in a letter to Walpole: "He sets too much value on our talents for society (*nos agréments*), shows too much desire of acquiring them; it is constantly on the tip of my tongue to say to him, 'Do not put yourself to so much trouble; you deserve the honor of being a Frenchman.'"

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 117.

tianity which pervades it. "Struck with a first impression," he says, "Gibbon, in writing the *Decline and Fall of the Empire*, saw in Christianity only an institution which had placed vespers, barefooted friars, and processions, in the room of the magnificent ceremonies of Jupiter, and the triumphs of the Capitol."

Others attributed it in part to the *conservative* quality of his politics, which led him to regard Christianity as a "daring innovation." It seems probable that his tendencies and habits of mind, which were eminently favorable to skepticism, and the society in which he had early moved (and especially of late in the saloons of Paris), had much more to do with the result than either of these causes.

About five years after his return home his father died (1770). This is the period of his life which he says he passed with the least enjoyment, and remembered with the least satisfaction. He attended "every spring the meetings of the militia at Southampton, — and rose successively to the rank of major and lieutenant-colonel;" but was each year "more disgusted with the inn, the wine, the company, and the tiresome repetition of annual attendance and daily exercise." From his own account, however, it appears that other and deeper causes produced his *ennui*. Sincerely attached to his home, he yet felt the anomaly of his position. At thirty, still a dependant, without a settled occupation, without a definite social *status*, he often regretted that he had not embraced some profession: "From the emoluments of a profession," he says, "I might have derived an ample fortune, or a competent income, instead of being stinted to the same narrow allowance, to be increased only by an event which I sincerely deprecate."[1] Doubtless the secret fire of a consuming, but as yet ungratified, literary ambition also troubled his repose.

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 132.

He still "contemplated at awful distance" *The Decline and Fall;* and, meantime, revolved other subjects. Hesitating between the revolutions of Florence and Switzerland, he consulted M. Deyverdun, a young Swiss with whom he had been intimate during his first residence at Lausanne, and decided in favor of the land which was his "friend's by birth" and "his own by adoption." He executed the first book in French; it was read as an anonymous production before a literary society of foreigners in London, and condemned. Gibbon sat and listened to their strictures. It never got beyond that rehearsal; and though Hume encouraged him to proceed, Gibbon declared the sentence just, and declined.

In 1767, he joined with M. Deyverdun in starting the *Mémoirs Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne.* But its circulation was limited, and only two volumes had appeared when Deyverdun went abroad. The materials already collected for a third volume were suppressed. It may be interesting to the reader to know that in the first volume is a review by Gibbon of Lord Lyttleton's *History of Henry II.*

The next appearance of the historian made a deeper impression. It was the first distinct print of the lion's foot. "*Ex ungue leonem*" might have been justly said, for he attacked, and attacked successfully, the redoubtable Warburton. Of the many paradoxes in the *Divine Legation,* none is more extravagant than the theory that Virgil in the sixth book of his Æneid intended to *allegorize,* in the visit of his hero and the sybil to the shades, the initiation of Æneas, as a lawgiver, into the Eleusinian mysteries. This theory Gibbon completely exploded in his *Critical Observations* (1770); no very difficult task, indeed, but achieved in a style, and with a profusion of learning, which showed that its author was capable of far greater things. Warburton never replied, and few will believe that he would not, if he had not thought silence more discreet. Gibbon, however,

regrets that the style of his pamphlet was too acrimonious; and this regret, considering his antagonist's slight claims to forbearance, is creditable to him. "I cannot forgive myself the contemptuous treatment of a man who, with all his faults, was entitled to my esteem."[1]

At length, after fifteen years from the date of his maiden *Essai*, and five from his father's death — an event which left him the free use of his time — appeared the *first* volume of the history which has immortalized his name. His preparations for this great work were vast. The classics, "as low as Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, and Juvenal," had been long familiar. He now "plunged into the ocean of the Augustan history," and "with pen almost always in hand," pored over all the remains, Greek and Latin, between Trajan and the last of the western Cæsars. "The subsidiary rays of medals and inscriptions, of geography and chronology, were thrown on their proper objects; and I applied the collections of Tillemont, whose inimitable accuracy almost assumes the character of genius, to fix and arrange within my reach the loose and scattered atoms of historical information."[2] The Theodosian Code, with Godefroy's Commentary; the Christian Apologists, with the testimonies of Lardner; *The Annals and Antiquities* of Muratori; collated with "the parallel or transverse lines" of Sigonius and Maffei, Pagi and Baronius, were all critically studied. Such was a portion of the formidable apparatus employed by this great historical genius. His maxim as a student had always been *multum legere potius quam multa.* The reader will probably think, even from this imperfect enumeration of his studies, that he read both *multum* and *multa;* but the general accuracy of his investigations was commensurate with their variety. It appears from his own confession that he long brooded over the chaos of materials

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 139. [2] Ib. p. 140.

before light dawned upon it. At the commencement, he says, "all was dark and doubtful;" the limits, divisions, even the *title* of his work were undetermined; the first chapter was composed three times, and the second and third twice, before he was satisfied with his efforts. But this prolonged meditation on his design and its execution was well repaid by the result; so methodical did his ideas become, and so readily did his materials shape themselves, that (with the above exceptions) the original MS. of the entire six quartos were sent *uncopied* to the printer. He also says that not a sheet had been seen by any other eyes than those of author and printer. This last statement must be taken with a small deduction; or rather we must suppose that a few chapters had been submitted, if not to the "eyes," to the "ears" of others; for he elsewhere tells us that he was "soon disgusted with the *modest* practice of reading the manuscript to his friends."

Such, however, were his preliminary difficulties, that he confesses he was often "tempted to cast away the labor of seven years." He persevered, and in February, 1776, the first volume was published. The success was instant, and, for a quarto, probably unprecedented. The entire impression was exhausted in a few days. The author might almost have said, as Lord Byron after the publication of *Childe Harold*, that "he awoke one morning and found himself famous." In addition to public applause, he was gratified by the more select praises of Robertson and Hume, and declares that the complimentary letter of the last "overpaid the labors of ten years." Hume applauds, as may be supposed, the "prudent temperament" of the historian in the treatment of the delicate subjects of the "celebrated chapters." Nevertheless, he predicted "clamor;" and formed a much more correct notion of the effects on the public mind than Gibbon had done. He admits the nation's reverence for Christianity, though he calls it "superstition;" Gibbon

believed, or affected to believe, that England sympathized with the indifferentism of France.

Two years before the publication of this first volume (1774) Gibbon was elected member of parliament for Liskeard. His political duties did not suspend his prosecution of his history, except on one occasion, and for a little while. In the year 1779 he undertook a task on behalf of the ministry, which, if well performed, was, it must be confessed, well rewarded. The French government had issued a manifesto preparatory to a declaration of war, and Gibbon was solicited by Chancellor Thurlow, and Lord Weymouth, Secretary of State, to answer it. This produced his able *Mémoire Justificatif*, composed in French, and delivered to the courts of Europe. He was rewarded with a seat at the Board of Trade and Plantations, — little more than a sinecure in itself, but with a very substantial salary of nearly £800 per annum. His acceptance displeased his political associates, and he was accused of "deserting a party in which," he declares, "he had never enlisted." A note of Fox, however, on the margin of a copy of Gibbon's history, records a very distinct remembrance of the historian's previous vituperation of the ministry; and this could not but make his political services look venal. He is *said* to have said that "there would be no hope for England except by taking off the heads of six of the cabinet, and exposing them as an example in parliament." Yet in a fortnight he accepted place. Lord Sheffield says his friend never intended the words to be taken *literally!* No doubt, but it sufficiently shows what he thought of the *deserts* of the ministry he yet consented to serve. But who can read the life and works of Gibbon and imagine him a martyr, whether for love, politics, or religion?

At the general election in 1780, he lost his seat for Liskeard, but was subsequently elected for Lymington. The ministry of Lord North, however, was tottering, and soon

after fell; the Board of Trade was abolished, and Gibbon's salary vanished with it; — no trifle, for his expenditure had been for three years on a scale somewhat disproportionate to his private fortune. He did not like to depend on statesmen's promises, which are proverbially uncertain of fulfilment; he as little liked to retrench; and he was wearied of parliament, where he had never given any but silent votes. Urged by such considerations, he once more turned his eyes to the scene of his early exile, where he might live on his decent patrimony in a style which was impossible in England, and pursue unembarrassed his literary studies. He therefore resolved to fix himself at Lausanne.

A word only is necessary on his parliamentary career. Neither nature nor acquired habits qualified him to be an orator; his late entrance on public life, his natural timidity, his feeble voice, his limited command of idiomatic English, and even, as he candidly confesses, his literary fame, were all obstacles to success. "After a fleeting, illusive hope, prudence condemned me to acquiesce in the humble station of a mute. . . . I was not armed by nature and education with the intrepid energy of mind and voice — 'Vincentem strepitus et natum rebus agendis.' Timidity was justified by pride, and even the success of my pen discouraged the trial of my voice." His repugnance to public life is strongly expressed in a letter to his father of a very early date. He prays that the money which a seat in parliament would cost may be expended in a mode more agreeable to him. Gibbon was eight-and-thirty when he entered parliament; and the obstacles which even at an earlier period he would have had to encounter were hardly likely to be vanquished then.

Nor had he much political sagacity. He was better skilled in investigating the past than in divining the future. While Burke and Fox, and so many great statesmen, proclaimed the consequence of the collision with America, Gibbon saw nothing but colonies in rebellion, and a paternal

government justly incensed. His silent votes were all given on that hypothesis. In a similar manner, while he abhorred the French revolution, he seemed to have had no apprehension, like Chesterfield, Burke, or even Horace Walpole, of its approach, or that it had any thing to do with the philosophic coteries in which he had taken such delight.

In 1781, he published two more quartos of his history. They excited less controversy, and were therefore less talked about. This seems to have extorted from him a half murmur about "prejudice and neglect." The fact is, there was less room for discussion and complaint; the volumes, however, were read with silent avidity, and deserved it. Though less exciting than the first, they were written with a deeper judgment, and were more free from the taint of infidelity.

Having sold all his property except his library — to him equally a necessary and a luxury — Gibbon repaired to Lausanne in September, 1783, and took up his abode with his early friend Deyverdun, now a resident there. Perfectly free from every engagement but those which his own tastes imposed, easy in his circumstances, commanding just as much society, and that as select as he pleased, with the noblest scenery spread out at his feet, no situation can be imagined more favorable for the prosecution of his literary enterprise; — a hermit in his study as long as he chose, and the most delightful recreation always ready for him at the threshold. "In London," says he, "I was lost in the crowd; I ranked with the first families in Lausanne, and my style of prudent expense enabled me to maintain a fair balance of reciprocal civilities. . . . Instead of a small house between a street and a stable-yard, I began to occupy a spacious and convenient mansion, connected on the north side with the city, and open on the south to a beautiful and boundless horizon. A garden of four acres had been laid out by the taste of M. Deyverdun; from the garden a rich

scenery of meadows and vineyards descends to the Leman Lake, and the prospect far beyond the lake is crowned by the stupendous mountains of Savoy."[1] In this enviable retreat, it is no wonder that a year should have been suffered to roll round before he vigorously resumed his great work,—and with many men it would never have been resumed in such a paradise. We may remark *en passant* that the retreat was often enlivened, or invaded, by friendly tourists from England, whose "frequent incursions" into Switzerland our recluse seems half to lament as an evil. What would he have said fifty years later? Among others, Mr. Fox gave him two "welcome days of free and private society" in 1788. Differing as they did in politics, Gibbon's testimony to the genius and character of the great statesman is highly honorable to both. "Perhaps no human being," he says, "was ever more perfectly exempt from the taint of malevolence, vanity, or falsehood."

When once fairly reseated at his task he proceeded in this delightful retreat leisurely, yet rapidly, to its completion. The fourth, fifth, and sixth volumes were all in manuscript before he thought of printing. On the 27th of June, 1787, he was "free," if freedom can be predicated of that condition, so profoundly natural, which Gibbon has as naturally delineated. "I have presumed," says he, "to mark the moment of conception; I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters,

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 166.

and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion ; and that whatsoever might be the future date of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious." [1] Sad that the *Consolations of Philosophy* should have offered nothing better than this!

Taking the manuscript of the last three volumes with him, Gibbon, after an absence of four years, once more visited London. The arrangements for publishing volumes so heralded by their predecessors, were soon effected, and the printing proceeded apace; but after it was completed, a little trait of characteristic egotism for a while delayed the publication. The great event was to synchronize with the author's fifty-first birthday, and the two great events were celebrated by Mr. Cadell, the publisher, by a third great event, — no less than a literary dinner in the author's honor; — where, says Gibbon, "I seemed to blush while they read an elegant compliment from Mr. Hayley." Assuredly it ought to have been no *seeming* blush with which the historian listened to the fulsome hyperboles of the verses with which this *mediocre* Pindar regaled him; and if he did not blush for himself, he ought to have done so for the Muse.

The last volumes of the work were eagerly read, but much criticized; and while the same religious objections were taken, and justly, the author was found more fault with for the indecency of his notes. Gibbon professes that he never could understand this charge; and it is very likely (though very lamentable) that he spoke the simple truth. In his defence he says he had wrapped up the offensive matter in

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 170.

the learned languages; but then, to how many thousands of those who read his book were those languages familiar! The question is as to the *necessity* of such citations and comments as those in which he has indulged, and few will contend for it, in the majority of cases, to any legitimate purpose of history. He also says that he had been equally free, though less censured, in the earlier volumes. This would be nothing to the purpose even if true; but it is hardly true; for it would be easy to point out in the later volumes more than one instance in which Gibbon has gone completely out of his way to introduce impurities which none but a mind too accustomed to revolve such ideas would wish to suggest to the minds of others; and *one* instance, at least, in which he has chosen to improvise a ludicrous *varia lectio* of a passage for the very purpose of conveying a most gross obscenity. As a writer in the *Quarterly Review* has very justly remarked, "the critical scrupulosity with which he investigates the most nauseous details, sifting them with the pertinacity and relish of a duck filtering the filthiest mud for its meal," "his sly innuendoes, his luxurious amplifications," disclose a gross and prurient mind. Many other men equally skeptical, would have shrunk from this kind of pollution; he plunges into the filth with all the *gout* and relish of a congenial sensuality.

He returned to Switzerland in July, 1788; but the death of his friend Deyverdun, and the *ennui* resulting from the loss of his great occupation, which had been as a daily companion for so many years, had divested his retreat of its chief charms; while the premonitory mutterings of the great thunderstorm of the French Revolution, which reverberated in hollow echoes even through the quiet valleys of Switzerland, further troubled his repose. At length public events, seconded by motives of friendship, drove the historian to his island home. He arrived in England in 1793. He appears to have amused himself during the latter part of

his stay at Lausanne with his *Memoirs*, which, with his correspondence and miscellaneous pieces, it was reserved for his friend Lord Sheffield to give to the public.

His life was now drawing to a close. He had fondly anticipated, from the "laws of probability so true in general," but, alas! "so fallacious in particular," fifteen years of life. They proved in his case to be "fallacious in particular," for he survived scarcely a fourth of the hoped for period. He died January 16, 1794, about nine months after his return to England. Singularly enough, he had been for years afflicted by the disease which at last proved fatal, but had been insensible to its importance, and had declined, from false delicacy, to seek medical aid. It was an element of the "probabilities," which he had not calculated.

Just before his death he was in full possession of his senses, and is said to have died with much composure; but he was evidently unconscious of the stealthy step of the Destroyer till the curtain was suddenly drawn, and the blow struck.

The character of Gibbon presents much that is personally and socially estimable. Of a frigid temperament, he had not in his composition one particle of the qualities which constitute moral greatness in any one of its many forms; but it would be unjust to deny that he was amiable and good-tempered, and capable of feeling and inspiring a firm, though not very enthusiastic friendship. It must be added that his friendships were such as did not involve any severe strain upon patience, self-denial, generosity, or on his characteristic equanimity. That equanimity, it must be allowed, was very little tried in any way; he practised his philosophy cheaply. Born to competency, and at length possessed of fortune — always fully sensible of the advantages which fortune brings in her train — provided with pleasures and occupations he intensely loved — successful in

the great object of his literary ambition, which was his only strong passion, and the gratification of which, as his *Memoirs* show, afforded him intense delight — he seems, if we but suppose this world to be *all*, to have whiled away his time here as pleasantly as any wise epicurean could, and to have computed the sum of his enjoyments at the close with a sufficiently complacent, but not erroneous arithmetic.[1] "M. d'Alembert relates," says he, "that as he was walking in the gardens of *Sans Souci* with the king of Prussia, Frederick said to him, 'Do you see that old woman, a poor weeder, asleep on that sunny bank? She is probably a more happy being than either of us.' The king and the philosopher may speak for themselves; for my part I do not envy the old woman." [2]

But with good-nature and social amenity the praise of his personal character almost ends. No traits, so far as we can find, of self-denial, generosity, magnanimity, nobility of mind, mark his history. M. Vaillant even charges him with "*insensibility* to all lofty and generous *sentiments*." This is too strong; at least if the *expression* of "lofty" sentiments (a cheap way, it must be admitted, of manifesting the more arduous virtues), may be taken as a key to character where we cannot appeal to the better test of action. Of such *sentiments* of sympathy with magnanimous virtue, there is no lack in his *Decline and Fall*, — if we except two subjects. "His reflections," says Porson, "are just and profound; he pleads eloquently for the rights of mankind and the duty of toleration, nor does his *humanity ever slumber* — unless when women are ravished, and Christians persecuted." The exceptions, it must be confessed, cut deep, and remind us a little of the indignant virtue of the Irish woman, who challenged her accusers to say, *barring* theft, lust, and drunkenness, what they could have to allege against her.

[1] *Memoirs*, pp. 182–184. [2] *Ib.*, p. 183.

Vanity he had in abundance, as appears in his *Memoirs;* indeed, without it would any man ever write his autobiography? Yet it is accompanied in Gibbon with much candor. Less indulgence can be given to the contemptuous arrogance with which he treats opponents.

His conversation, though, as might be expected, full of information, seems to have been, if not tinged with pedantry, yet too formal. He talked much as he wrote, and this prevented his attaining the ease and grace of the best colloquial style. "His conversation," says M. Suard, "never carried one away. Its fault was an artificiality which never permitted him to say any thing unless well," — that is, well in his estimate; and so, in books, and notes, and conversation his diction was apt to be *recherché*, and his sentences a mosaic.

Gibbon's genius was singularly adapted to the task he undertook. He ironically observes, in his *Memoirs*, that since "philosophy has exploded all innate ideas and natural propensities," fortuitous causes in early life must be alleged to account for the invincible bent of his mind to *history.* But he distinctly intimates his convictions to the contrary in another part of his *Memoirs:* "After his oracle Dr. Johnson, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds denies all original genius, any natural propensity of the mind to one art or science rather than another. Without engaging in a metaphysical or, rather, verbal dispute, I *know* by experience that from my early youth I aspired to the character of an historian."[1] No just philosophy is likely to explode "innate" aptitudes of fundamental peculiarities of mind, whether generic or individual; and to these, at least as strongly as to education or accident, must we attribute each special bias of genius. Not that these last have little to do with the character of intellect, which is finally the result of

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 106.

two *variables* — certain original tendencies of mind, and the discipline to which the mind has been subjected. It is a departure perhaps from ordinary language to speak of some one distinct endowment of mind, or *congeries* of endowments, and call it an *historic* genius, in the same way we speak of a philosophical or poetical genius; but if the phrase be ever allowable, it is assuredly so in the case of Gibbon. It may be more proper to say, however, that he had in large measure all those separate endowments, which, in conjunction, best fit a man for this department of composition; some of them hardly compatible at all, and scarcely ever seen united. In him all were possessed in a harmony and perfection seldom equalled, perhaps never surpassed; a most retentive memory, the most active powers of acquisition, indomitable industry, a mind capable equally of ascending to the most comprehensive, and of descending to the most minute surveys; of appreciating the beautiful and sublime in classic literature, and yet of delighting in the verbal criticism, tedious collations, and dry antiquarian research by which the text is established or illustrated; of celebrating the more imposing events of history with congenial pomp of description, and of investigating with the dullest plodder's patience and perseverance the origin of nations, the emigrations of obscure tribes, and the repulsive yet instructive problems which ethnology presents. Accordingly, the widest deductions of historic philosophy alternate in his pages with attempts to fix the true reading of an obscure passage or a minute point of chronology or geography. It may even be said that in these last investigations he took almost as much delight as in depicting the grander scenes of history, and surrendered himself as absolutely for the time to the migrations of the Goths and Scythians as to the campaigns of Belisarius or the conquests of the Saracens. It must be added that never has any historian evinced greater logical sagacity in making comparatively

obscure details yield important inferences, or held with a firmer hand the balance in the case of conflicting probabilities; none who has exhibited sounder judgment or self-control (always excepting Christianity) in cases where it is so easy for learned enthusiasm to run into fanciful hypotheses. To these qualities must be added a singular skill in marshalling for effect the diversified and multifarious matters of his history, and often much richness of imagination and great graphic art in investing their more picturesque features with the brilliant tints and colors, the due light and shade which belong to historic painting.

Of the many high qualities which characterize his history perhaps none is more marked than the manner in which he he has managed to manœuvre, so to speak, the vast array of facts which crowd its pages. It is the amplest historic canvas ever spread, the largest historic painting ever executed by a single hand. The history of Rome is, for the many centuries which Gibbon treats, the history of the world; and it is astonishing that he should have been able to work with so much ease such vast and incongruous materials with so much unity of design; that he should have been able (so to speak) to exhibit the many-colored nations of all varieties of costume, habits, languages, and religions in one tolerably consistent *tableau*. The history is a sort of moving panorama of the nations; and as tribe after tribe, nation after nation, Celt, Goth, Saracen, and Sarmatian appear on the scene from the obscurity of their original seats, they blend with grace in the picturesque narrative. His history is like the Indus or the Mississippi, swelling and still swelling by a thousand tributary floods, which augment its volume, and tinge its waters, but without destroying the identity or the pervading character of the stream.

The style of Gibbon has great merits, mixed with some not trivial defects. The "luminous Gibbon," was a phrase of Sheridan in his speech on Hastings's trial, with which

Gibbon was much delighted: but which the malicious wit afterwards playfully denied, and said he must have meant the "*vo*luminous Gibbon." Yet the epithet may well stand. The diction is precise, energetic, massive; splendid where the pictorial demands of the narrative require it, as that of Livy; and sometimes, where profound reflections are to be concisely expressed, as sententious and graphic as that of Tacitus. Less can be said for the *sources* of his diction; it is not sufficiently idiomatic English, and bears everywhere the traces of his early addictedness to French. The Gallicisms are in many places amusingly perverse. Thus, for example, his constant use of "prevents" in the old sense of "anticipate" sometimes leads to ludicrous apparent contradiction, as when he tells us that "The prefect had signalized his fidelity to Maximin by the alacrity with which he had obeyed and even *prevented* the cruel mandates of the tyrant;" or, again, that "the fortunate soil assisted and even prevented the hand of cultivation."

The *structure* of his style is open to still greater objections than his *diction*. Harmonious as it often is, it is too frequently set and formal; deficient in flexibility. It is apt to pall on the ear by the too frequent recurrence of the same cadence at equal intervals, and the too unsparing use of antithesis. It is not veined marble, but an exquisite tesselation; not the fluent naturally winding stream, but a stately *aqueduct*, faced with stone, adorned with wooded embankments, or flowing over noble arches, but an aqueduct still. It is a just criticism of Sir James Mackintosh, that probably no writer ever derived less benefit from his *professed* models. Pascal, Voltaire, Hume, were his delight, and he acknowledges (as so unsuccessful a pupil well might) that he often closed the pages of the last with a feeling of despair. Addison and Swift he read for the very purpose of improving his acquaintance with idiomatic English, yet, as the above critic remarks, "with so little success, that in the

very act of characterizing these writers, he has deviated not a little from that beautiful simplicity which is their peculiar distinction."

The irony of Gibbon, on which he evidently plumed himself, is in him no pleasant feature, not merely because in *history* it can seldom be in place if much indulged, but because it is especially distasteful to the great majority of his readers when applied to those deeply serious themes on which he usually exercises it. He flattered himself, as already seen, that Pascal's *Provincial Letters* had taught him to use this weapon gracefully; as little, it may be retorted, as Addison and Swift had taught him the use of idiomatic English. The difference between an innocent smile and a sardonic grin is scarcely greater than that between the irony of Pascal and the irony of Gibbon; the one speaks with a sweet *riant* air, as with the consciousness that what is ridiculed *is* ridiculous; the other with a cautious, stealthy, Guy Faux look, as if conscious of a sinister purpose. Gibbon's irony almost always wears a sneer, and seldom provokes the smile of the reader, even where the subject does not repel it. Not only so, it is so elaborate as to lose much of its grace even where innocent; in other cases it is often *so* masked as to leave the reader (Pascal is never thus changeable) in doubt whether the author meant what he seemed to mean, or whether he is not meditating, by the very form of expression, a pusillanimous escape from the inferences that may be legitimately founded on it.

We have expressed ungrudging admiration of the great merits of this astonishing work. It has, nevertheless, one pervading blemish, of which we shall speak with similar impartiality. That blemish is, of course, the treatment of Christianity.

If the Christian public had given itself time to reflect, it would have been seen that Gibbon's attack really afforded little cause for alarm. The purpose of the assassin-like

stroke from behind the curtain of his irony is plain enough; but is really a *brutum fulmen*. Gibbon himself has provided for his own defeat by his very mode of conducting the assault. If he meant, as he seemed to *insinuate* rather than *affirm* (or, to speak more accurately, insinuated while in words he expressly affirmed the contrary), that his "five secondary causes" gave a probable *natural* solution of the *origin* and early triumphs of Christianity, — then the whole thing was a ludicrous instance of ὕστερον πρότερον, or, as our proverb has it, of "the cart before the horse." The story begins all too late; the "causes" require as much to be accounted for as the "effects;" or rather, they are among the very *effects* to be accounted for. According to this mode of explaining the *origin* of Christianity, causes are assigned which implied not only its existence, but its activity; in other words, the hypothesis assigns Christianity *itself* as a cause of *itself*, and its success as a ground of its success. Thus, for example, if he is to be supposed (as he evidently wishes the reader to infer) to be accounting for the purely human origin and triumphs of Christianity, — the most potent secondary causes he assigns are the zeal, morality, virtue, unity,[1] and so forth, of the Christian church; meanwhile, the very thing that demands explanation is just the

[1] As to his *third* secondary cause, "miracles," the same may be said as of his ironically conceded primary cause. He either meant that miracles had been performed, or not; if he did, he of course concedes the main point; if he did not, then he is giving a *nothing* (by a new name) to account for the success of Christianity. If it be said that what he *meant* was the *pretension* to miracles, though miracles there were none, it is very likely; but then it is easy to reply that though such pretensions have been often of service when a religion has *already become accredited*, there is no example (unless he choose to *beg the question* by assuming it of the Jewish and Christian religions) of a religion successfully *founding itself* on such hazardous assumptions, while there are many examples of failure in such attempts; that is, Gibbon's cause, as usual, comes too late.

sudden apparition in the world of this singular phenomenon, the Christian church, with this bright retinue of virtues; how it was that a system from which the Jews have recoiled more than any other nation for the last eighteen hundred years, should have sprung up in their bosom, in spite of all their national antipathies; how it was that a system which was scarcely less odious from its origin, its character, its doctrines (in a word, every thing), to all other nations, should nevertheless have found its proselytes so rapidly in every part of the Roman empire; and in a few centuries, not only gained a sphere for the exercise of that marvellous "virtue" and "zeal" which *it* indeed might cause, but which could hardly cause *it*, but dethroned all the deities of Olympus, and became the established religion of the empire! *That* was the problem; and Gibbon takes it up long after Christianity had made good its footing, and assigns, if he means what he seems to mean, causes for its origin and success, which already presuppose both origin and success! It is as though a man were seeking the source of the Nile, and ascending no higher than the cataracts, avows that he finds its fountain there. Such is the value of Gibbon's hypothesis, *supposing* he intended his secondary causes to *account* for the origin and triumphs of Christianity; but, as before said, he made a provision for his retreat, by nominally granting the "truth of the doctrine and the providence of God" to be *the* great cause of the success of Christianity. Seriously, one would imagine, (if we did not know his manner,) that he meant all this; for in his *Vindication*, in reply to Davis, where he takes occasion briefly to mention Watson's *Letters*, and to excuse himself from reply, he appeals to this very concession as a reason for silence! He says, — "The remarks of Dr. Watson consist more properly of general argumentation than of particular criticism. He fairly owns that I have expressly allowed the full and irresistible weight of the *first* great cause of the success of Christianity; and he

is too candid to deny that the five *secondary* causes, which I had attempted to explain, operated with *some* degree of active energy towards the accomplishment of that great event. The only question which remains between us relates to the *degree* of the weight and effect of those secondary causes; and as I am persuaded that our philosophy is not of the dogmatic kind, we should soon acknowledge that this precise degree cannot be ascertained by reasoning, nor perhaps be expressed by words."[1] This language, on the supposition that Gibbon was still really *ironizing*, greatly aggravates the disingenuousness of the "celebrated chapters." But either he meant what he said, or he did not; if he did, it of course formally surrenders the argument which infidelity has founded on the supposed sufficiency of his "secondary" causes; if he did *not* mean it, he of course evades the very question which his antagonist (and every other discreet antagonist) would contest with him, by ironically affecting argument.

It may be further remarked, not only that the *Christian* feels that the "secondary causes" of Gibbon do not touch the principal problem, — but that infidelity has confessed, in a most significant way, a similar mistrust, by laboriously constructing other, and often reciprocally destructive hypotheses, to account for the intractable phenomena. That of Strauss is one, which, unlike that of Gibbon, professes to track the origin of Christianity to its cradle; but faithfully represents that of Gibbon and many more, in one respect, that it is ephemeral. It is even now fast losing its transient *prestige*. These shining exhalations from the bog of skepticism glimmer, flicker, and vanish. Fortuitous myth, deliberate fiction, deep fraud practising on simplicity, deep fanaticism practising on itself, — have all under various modifications been resorted to, as the contradictory basis of infidel theories, and

[1] *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. iii. p. 362. The italics are the author's own.

have been successively abandoned. The problem of the origin of *such* a system as Christianity under *such* circumstances, and with *such* results, within a given century, still presents the ancient difficulty. Meanwhile it may now be safely asserted, that the chief hypotheses have been exhausted; and we have reason to infer therefore, that the vast majority who examine Christianity will be as they have hitherto been, of Butler's opinion, that nothing but the truth of the gospel will *harmonize the facts.*

But still further; it is a special weakness in Gibbon's theory that so far from his "secondary causes" being sufficient to account for the origin, they do not even account for the *progress* of the gospel; they are, when closely investigated, quite as often opposed to that progress; sometimes must have been far greater hindrances than helps. Nothing can be more infelicitous than some of his suppositions. For example, he imagines that the "intolerant zeal" of Christianity — which expressed the most open and derisive contempt of all the gods, consecrated by the classic mythologies — was a mysterious advantage to it! That the austere virtue with which, be it recollected, it not only recoiled from the too welcome laxity of a jovial heathenism, but enlarged the circle of moral duties by adding the demands of the most diffusive and refined *spiritual* purity — would somehow attract votaries! That its visions of immortality — of a heaven so unalluring — of a hell so terrible — would be of magnetic force! surely these are problematic *auxiliaries.* Similarly, some of the facts he assumes are purely imaginary; he attributes the zeal of proselytism manifested by the Christians to a Jewish origin, forgetting that the *zeal* of the Jews was just of the opposite kind; that Judaism was as exclusive as Christianity is catholic. There may be, no doubt, zeal for freedom and zeal for slavery; but because each is *zeal*, it would be odd to derive one from the other. Another cause to which he attributes much, was, alas! too often non-

existent, and its effects were at least neutralized by opposite causes. It is the *unity* of the early church; its close compacted organization! Surely a singular topic of compliment, and even at a very early period a doubtful source of strength. The divisions, jealousies, and quarrels of Christians, were from the very first their weakness and their shame; and must have been at least as influential to retard, as ever their union was to advance, the progress of the gospel.

In conclusion, Christians may take some encouragement from Gibbon's failure. If ever man could hope to be the historic champion of infidelity with success, it was he. His work has such prodigious merits in nearly every thing but its treatment of Christianity, as to have procured it almost universal perusal; it has now been published for the greater part of a century; and what, relatively to Christianity, have been its effects? Quite inappreciable. His management of this high argument is generally considered as the great blot of the work; as a sufficient, or even plausible account of the *origin* and early *triumphs* of Christianity, it is for the most part abandoned by infidels themselves.

The New Testament, somehow, still manages to impress the bulk of mankind who examine it, with an indelible conviction that it is the fruit of neither imposture, fiction, nor fanaticism, and that the *facts* connected with the propagation of the religion it embodies are historic verities. Since men have persisted in this belief, in spite of the efforts of such men as Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon, to disabuse them, it is not probable that the enterprise in which such champions have failed will be successfully achieved by other hands. Hence it may be inferred that if Christianity be false, it will, nevertheless, *not* be exploded.

The manner in which Gibbon prosecutes his object affords, no doubt, great facilities for exciting *prejudices* against Christianity, and ample scope for his cherished sneer. Christianity does not enter on the scene till it had degener-

ated in some degree from its primitive purity, and had contracted many pollutions. The foibles and follies of its adherents, of course afford a very easy triumph to the satirist.

The Christian religion, once originated, and having achieved an initial success, was left to struggle with all the corrupting influences of the world, and, as might be expected, did not come off uninjured. Brought into contagious contact with false philosophies and degrading superstitions, and gathering converts from those who were but partially reclaimed from either, no wonder that its purity was blemished. But all this which is favorable to Gibbon's satire, is any thing but favorable to his argument: for the characteristics of Christianity to which, one moment, he would fain assign such wonderful efficacy, are anon exhibited in a very different light; are alternately, as the exigencies of his argument or the gratification of his malignity may dictate, the objects of respect or contempt. Thus the zeal and the purity of manners which are now so potent a cause of success, are now transformed, the one into bigotry and fanaticism, the other into austerity and grimace. But *velis et remis;* if Christianity may but be discredited, the historian seems but little troubled by his own inconsistencies. Thus, to give other instances of this blind animosity: sometimes the Christians are, nearly all, poverty-stricken wretches, the very dregs of society; presently they have plenty of riches among them, and the mere prodigality of their benevolence is no inconsiderable bait for proselytism: at one time the early Christians, for a certain purpose, are too obscure to attract the attention of the Roman great; then, for another purpose, it is suddenly *remarkable* that illustrious men like Tacitus and Seneca could have been so insensible to its existence, or have regarded it with such apathy!

The historian, in short, has greatly diminished the pernicious effect of his attack, by the *animus* he everywhere betrays. It is that of inveterate prejudice, of resolute hostility.

On this one topic he is never moved to generous or noble emotions. The excellence of the Christian ethics, indeed, is coldly conceded; but even Gibbon could hardly deny that.

The sixteenth chapter is in some respects worse than the fifteenth; for in his anxiety to depreciate the numbers and heroism of the Christian martyrs, he forgets what is due to his professed maxims of toleration, and becomes, if not the apologist, the palliator of the most odious persecution. But his conduct here has been rebuked by one whose eminently calm and judicial spirit, and exemption from all suspicion of religious fanaticism, render his testimony particularly impressive. "The sixteenth chapter," says Sir James Mackintosh, "I cannot help considering as a very ingenious and specious, but very disgraceful extenuation of the cruelties perpetrated by the Roman magistrates against the Christians. It is written in the most contemptibly factious spirit of prejudice against the sufferers. . . . . Dr. Robertson has been the subject of much blame for his zeal or supposed lenity toward the Spanish murderers and tyrants in America. That the sixteenth chapter of Mr. Gibbon did not excite the same or greater disapprobation, is a proof of the unphilosophical and indeed fanatical animosity against Christianity which was so prevalent during the latter part of the seventeenth century."[1] It is also well observed by M. Guizot, that there is scarcely any thing in his history that does not move Gibbon more than Christianity and its fortunes. The achievements of a vigorous barbarism — the sanguinary conquests, even the odious cruelties of a Bajazet or a Tamerlane — are described with more animation than the moral conquests of Christianity. One would have imagined that at least the prodigious influence of Christianity, true or false, on the world's history and civilization, would have been a tempting theme for the philosophical historian's speculation.

[1] Mackintosh's Life, Vol. I. p. 245.

Yet, as the above writer has observed, it is a topic almost unappreciated by him. A single sentence from M. Guizot's article in the *Biographie Universelle* well expresses the above traits. "Après s'être efforcé de rebaisser le courage héroïque des martyrs Chrétiens, il prend plaisir à célébrer le féroces exploits de Tamerlan et des Tartares: la grandeur materiélle, si on peut le dire, le frappe beaucoup plus que la grandeur morale; et les élans d'une vertu sublime ne pénètrant point j'usqu' à son ame, tandis que les écarts d'une force barbare séduissent son imagination et égarent son j'ugement.

It is difficult, as several critics have remarked, to account for Gibbon's extreme injustice to Christianity. Some have fancied, and himself in his later days would fain countenance the fancy, that it was partly due to his "conservative politics;" because he regarded Christianity as he would a "modern innovation," and yearned, with desperate fidelity to antiquity, over the old heathenism it supplanted; because he felt much as he did at seeing the throne of France menaced by revolutionary fury! A remarkable passage to this effect occurs in one of his latest letters to Lord Sheffield, dated 1790. He says, "Burke's book is a most admirable medicine against the French disease, which has made too much progress even in this happy country. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition. The primitive church, which I have treated with some freedom, was itself at that time an innovation, and I was attached to the old Pagan establishment."[1] To most this has appeared an *after-thought*, and justly. For was ever an argument more suicidal! When *he* wrote, Christianity, right or wrong, *was in possession;* and to attempt to destroy it was to do that very work of destruction which he professed to deprecate;

[1] Gibbon's Works, Vol. I. p. 214.

yet he had the effrontery to say in his *Memoir*, on the breaking out of the French Revolution, — "I have sometimes thought of writing a dialogue of the dead, in which Lucian, Erasmus, and Voltaire, should mutually acknowledge the danger of exposing an old superstition to the contempt of a blind and fanatic multitude."[1] Assuredly he should have made himself a *fourth* interlocutor in the dialogue, and confessed that *he* was the greatest culprit, in this kind, of his whole generation. Christianity, which, even if according to him a "superstition," could plead the hoary prescription of nearly two thousand years, he did his best to undermine, because so many centuries ago it had dethroned poor Jupiter! On the same principles, had he lived in the age of Augustus, he ought to have exemplified his zeal against innovation by being jealous of the upstart of Olympus, pleaded for the restoration of Saturn, or even gone back to the more "primitive tradition" of "Chaos and Old Night!"

It would have been well if the contemporaries of Gibbon had adopted that moderate estimate of his attack on Christianity which experience has now justified us in forming. As it was, the public took fright, and numberless hasty replies were published, — some of them insolent and abusive, most of them very inadequate in point of learning and logic, and none of them, if we except those of Watson and Lord Hailes, of much value. That of Watson alone touched the real points of the controversy, and showed that Gibbon's sophistry left the great problem as it was. It is a pity that Gibbon, instead of replying, evaded it by that disingenuous feint of agreement on the main point at issue, to which reference has been already made.

The only adversary whom he honored with distinct refutation was Davis, whose unworthy attempt to depreciate

[1] Gibbon's Works, Vol. I. p. 181.

the great historian's learning, and captious, cavilling, acrimonious charges of petty inaccuracies and discreditable falsification, gave Gibbon an easy triumph. It was, as he said, a "sufficient humiliation," to vanquish such an adversary. At the same time it must be confessed, that he selected his adversary discreetly.

The charges of inaccuracy against Gibbon in the citation of his authorities have often been repeated, but they are not, except to a very limited extent, substantiated in the estimate of the most recent and competent of his editors. In his treatment of Christianity, his inveterate and resolute prejudices may account for his partial evidence and perverted logic without accusing him, as Davis did, of ignorance, which *cannot* be suspected, or of deliberate *suppressio veri*, which one *would* not suspect.

It is impossible to enumerate here the various editions of Gibbon's works, or to enter into the voluminous literature they have evoked. It may be well to mention, however, the beautiful edition of the *Decline and Fall* recently put forth in eight volumes octavo under the editorship of Dr. W. Smith, and which embodies the notes of Professor Milman and M. Guizot.

He who would obtain a full insight into the character and genius of Gibbon, would do well to consult not only the *Memoir*, but the Letters and Journals; his life was emphatically that of a student and scholar, and these remains as vividly illustrate it, as the *Memoir* itself.

GASSENDI.

by Henry Rogers

Pierre Gassend Gassendi, one of the most distinguished philosophers of the seventeenth century, was born in the last decade of the sixteenth (22d January, 1592), at the village of Chantersier, near Digne in Provence. His family was humble, but his parents were virtuous; and to their instructions and influence Gassendi seems to have owed a more than usual debt of gratitude. His childhood exhibited the most astonishing, not to say incredible, precocity; and, if the feats told of him are true, shows (as M. De Gerando observes in his able sketch of this philosopher in the *Biographie Universelle*) that the feeling which is apt to regard unusual precocity as a treacherous omen is not always to be trusted. At the age of four, Sorbière tells us, he sometimes played among his youthful companions the part of a censor, and imitated the manner of a preacher. At the same tender age he often crept out at night to watch the stars — to the great alarm of his parents. At ten he declaimed in a tiny harangue before the Bishop of Digne (Antony of Boulogne), on the occasion of a pastoral visitation; which struck that prelate (as it well might) with such wonder, that he did not hesitate, in spite of the aforesaid general distrust of precocity, to prophesy the boy-orator's future eminence. Either that, or an early grave, or speedy

fatuity, would certainly be a very rational deduction from symptoms of such premature mental activity.

Gassendi was then receiving lessons from the curé of the village; but such was his ardor, that when he had learned the prescribed tasks, he would pursue his solitary studies by the light of the church lamp. At Digne he studied rhetoric, and composed certain *petites comĕdies*. He then went to Aix to study philosophy under Fesaye, a professor who strongly shared and expressed the rising discontent with the reigning scholastic philosophy. At sixteen our still beardless philosopher was elected to the chair of rhetoric at Digne; but, being destined for the church, speedily returned to Aix to study theology, and other branches appropriate to the ecclesiastical profession. At the early age of twenty-one he was simultaneously elected to the two chairs of philosophy and theology in the university of Aix. He chose the latter, and delivered his first course extemporaneously. He retained this chair for ten years. Not content with merely fulfilling the duties of his chair, he indulged in ample excursions into almost every department of science and literature, and made large collections of notes, which were afterwards of great service to him as a philosophical critic. His favorite pursuits in his leisure hours were astronomy and anatomy. He confesses, too, a passing *penchant* for astrology; but it soon disappeared, and he became one of the most strenuous opponents of that delusive science. In 1623 he was presented to a benefice in the cathedral of Digne, and gave up his chair in order to surrender himself more completely to study. In the following year he commenced author by the publication of a portion of his *Exercitationes paradoxicæ adversus Aristotelem*, a work which naturally called forth, in equal measure, the censures of the servile lovers of antiquity, and the admiration of the ardent minds who longed to inaugurate a new era in science and philosophy. He himself, according to M. De Gerando,

seemed half astonished at the report of his own artillery. But being now committed as author, he desired, says the same writer, "s'éclairer par des observations et des conseils et former des relations utiles." With this view he made excursions in Provence and Dauphiné, visited the capital, and took a journey to the Low Countries and Holland — everywhere forming friendships with the literati of the age, haunting learned establishments and consulting public libraries. With similar views, as a pilgrim of science, he projected, in common with other learned men, a journey to Italy and Constantinople, but this design he never executed. During his stay at Marseilles, in 1636, he made some important astronomical observations; and, by the aid of lunar eclipses, ascertained more correctly the limits, in latitude and longitude, of the Mediterranean, the length of which hydrographers, following Ptolemy, had exaggerated in the current charts by no less than two hundred leagues. In 1638, he found an ardent friend and admirer in Louis de Valois, afterwards Duc d'Angoulême; and if the philosopher, who ever preferred studious retirement to public life, had been ambitious, he might have availed himself of this patron's aid to secure station and riches. In 1645 there was some thought of making him tutor to the young prince, afterwards Louis XIV., but it came to nothing. He was appointed, however, mathematical lecturer in the Royal College of France by the good offices of the Archbishop of Lyons, brother of Cardinal Richelieu. From that ambitious minister himself he never received any favor; which, says De Gerando, is remarkable, considering the affection of the Archbishop and the renown of the philosopher. But, too often, politicians regard neither affection nor merit where talents cannot be serviceable to them, and Gassendi's modest and retiring spirit was little likely to help the ambitious cardinal. Meantime, his fame gradually spread. Amongst his ardent admirers appear royal and noble names: — Christina,

Queen of Sweden; Frederick III. of Denmark; a couple of popes; and several French princes. The Cardinal de Retz also highly esteemed and honored him. But he has more legitimate claims to remembrance than the suffrages of contemporaries illustrious only for rank and station; and, indeed, with the exception of De Retz, he is himself better known now than any of the above-mentioned admirers. A more emphatic testimony to the deserved esteem in which he was held is found in his intimacy with all the great literati and philosophers of his day, with most of whom he maintained an active correspondence, which forms by no means the least interesting portion of his works. A formidable list of these illustrious friends and acquaintances is given in Sorbiére's "General Preface" to Gassendi's works. Galileo conferred upon him signal proofs of esteem, and Gassendi consoled Galileo in his persecutions; though, like Descartes, he prudently declined any chance of sharing them. The martyrs of science have been always scarce.

The lectures of Gassendi at the Royal College were well attended. To Astronomy, which had been too much neglected, he gave due prominence. Public speaking, however, was injurious to his lungs, which were always delicate, and he was at length compelled to desist. He then repaired to Digne for the benefit of his native air, and also spent some pleasant time under the hospitable roof of his friend and patron Louis de Valois, Earl of Alais. During this interval he was chiefly occupied in composing his biographies. He finally returned to Paris, where, after a long and gradual decay, he died October 14, 1655. His death is said to have been hastened by the mad phlebotomy then in vogue. He himself had often condemned the practice; somewhat inconsistently, it will be thought, since he allowed himself to be killed by the Sangrados of his day. He is said to have reconciled himself to the treatment to which he submitted, though he could not approve it, by the thought

that the weakness it induced would probably diminish the pangs of dissolution. His last words, as he begged his attendant to feel the feeble pulsation of his heart, were, "You see what man's life is!" He was buried in the church of St. Nicholas des Champs, where he is honored by a mausoleum and bust.

The countenance of Gassendi is very imposing. The broad, massive brow, full eye, and expressive contour of the face, bespeak a mind full of intelligence, vivacity, and benevolence.[1]

The character of Gassendi's intellect is everywhere indicated by his works; — it was *critical* rather than *inventive*. Probably no one was ever better qualified to be a genuine historian of philosophy, possessing as he did keen analytical skill, in conjunction with profound and accurate erudition. His *Syntagma Philosophium* everywhere displays these characteristics. It is a vast attempt to exhibit in one encyclopædic view the entire circle of science as then known; — logics, physics, physiology, ethics, all find a place there. Subjects are discussed with a minuteness, copiousness, and patience, which remind one of the style in which questions, equally subtle and intractable, and not always more profitless, are treated in the *Summa Theologiæ* of Thomas Aquinas. Gassendi's powers of acquisition must have been singularly active; nor was his logical acuteness, or the liveliness of his imagination, much inferior to the promptness and retentiveness of his memory. His learning is never mere learning; like that of many of his erudite contemporaries, it ministers to his intellect, but does not oppress it. The vivacity of his mind animates and penetrates the mass; and

[1] The engraving in the folio edition of his works (1728) is in striking contrast with the grim effigies of Tycho Brahe and Copernicus in the quarto which contains Gassendi's lives of those philosophers. But it must be confessed the art of engraving had made prodigious progress in the interval.

the acuteness of his reasoning and the exuberance of his illustrations relieve of much of their tedium discussions in themselves often uninviting enough.

The intellectual characteristics of Gassendi, as compared with those of the far more original and profound Descartes, are sharply set off in a long and elaborate parallel in the article by De Gerando in the *Biographie Universelle*, and it will be well to find space for a translation of a few of its more discriminating touches. "There was no less opposition," says he, "between the character of their minds than between the principles of their systems. The genius of Descartes, full of originality, energy, and audacity, aspired in all things to *create;* the understanding of Gassendi, reserved, prudent, calm, and investigating, contented itself with a sound judgment of every thing; Descartes, shut up in himself, strove to reconstruct universal science by the force of meditation alone; Gassendi, observing nature, studying the writings of all ages, strove to coördinate facts, and to make an enlightened election among opinions. The former, proceeding in the track of the geometers, deduced from a few simple principles a long train of corollaries: the second, imitating the naturalists, collected a great number of given facts in order to draw solid deductions from their comparison. The former evinced admirable ability in the art of forming a system, the latter excelled in the criticism of other people's systems. The one, an absolute dogmatist, loved to speak in the style of a master, perhaps because he was conscious of profound conviction, and did not patiently bear contradiction; the other, a skilled dialectician, unravelled objections with art, distrusted himself, and easily entertained doubts which presented themselves. The one made great and veritable discoveries, and at the same time wandered into rash hypotheses; the other brought together a great number of partial truths, and, above all, destroyed a great number of errors."

The qualities of Gassendi's mind are perhaps nowhere more distinctly marked than in his commentary on the *Tenth Book of Diogenes Laertius*, and his tractate on the life and philosophy of Epicurus. In his attempt to ascertain, illustrate, and defend the philosophy of his favorite Epicurus, there was ample scope for his exuberant learning, his critical acumen, and his eclectic tendencies. It is a pity that he should have been so inordinately enamored of this Greek philosopher; for his strong expressions have invited accusations, and even given color to them, which seem wholly unfounded. Whatever his predilections for the atomic philosophy, he explicitly repudiates the irreligious dogmas founded upon it; and acknowledges that a supreme intelligence alone created and organized matter, alone imparted and conserves its laws and properties. "Metaphysics, morals, and physics," says M. De Gerando, "are conformed to the opinions of Epicurus; *yet* with the modifications which the principles of Christianity demand." Whether even the eclectic criticism of Gassendi could *quite* harmonize such materials, even by the most judicious selections and rejections, may be a question; but that he sincerely *thought* he had advanced nothing contrary to Christianity, is evident from the entire tenor of his declaration; and he must be believed unless we are determined on a more unpleasant alternative — that of supposing him at least as great a hypocrite as philosopher.[1] If the works just referred to exhibit as distinctly as any the more marked features of Gassendi's intellectual character, it is the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, of course, which displays all the en-

[1] After avowing his orthodoxy very explicitly, he says, in the Proemial Book of his *Syntagma*, "Et vidori quidem potest Epicurus arridere præ ceteris . . . at non idcirco aut probo omnia quæ illius sunt, — *etiam* Religionis *non* attinentia placita; aut quæ probo non sic amplector ut indubia certaque habeam . . ." — *Opera*, tom. i., p. 25, Edit. Florent.

dowments of this great philosopher in their amplest form. The remarks on the *Meditations* of Descartes, however, (supplied at the request of Father Mersenne,) best present many of its phases. They are marked by an acuteness and vivacity which he never surpassed.

As a metaphysician it has been mentioned that, however ingenious and learned, he is yet *critical* rather than *creative*. The same must be said of him as a mathematician and physical philosopher. His attainments in the mathematics were such as to elicit the praises of Barrow, no incompetent judge; and doubtless his fame might have been yet greater had he not, like Barrow himself, Pascal, Descartes, and so many other great mathematicians, varied or combined this study with so many very different pursuits. It seems, if we may judge by the conduct of almost every great mathematician from the time of those just mentioned to the present day, that, delightful as is the discovery and contemplation of mathematical truth, it cannot alone fill or content the mind. It is hardly possible to name instances of great mathematicians who are known *only* as great mathematicians, or who have not profoundly studied some branches either of physics or abstract science. Gassendi, according to Sorbière, avowedly valued mathematics chiefly as an indispensable instrument of discovery in physical science.

Ardently attached to the new philosophy of experiment, Gassendi was one of the first Frenchmen, if not the first, who fully appreciated Bacon, and in introducing him to his countrymen, paid ungrudging homage to his genius.[1] Though such an admirer, however, of the new school of physics, he himself, as in other departments, made but

[1] "Is videlicit meditatus attendensque, quam sit exiguum, quod, ex quo tempore homines philosophari cæperunt, circa veritatem, intimaque rerum naturæ notitiam consecuti sunt; *ausu vere Heroico* novam tentare viam est ausus . . . ." — *Opera*, tom. i., p. 55, Edit. Florent.

moderate contributions to discovery. Here, too, his genius was *critical*. But it is not to be forgotten that he was the first to observe the transit of a planet across the sun's disc — verifying the prediction of Galileo — and that, as before mentioned, he made some valuable hydrographic corrections by means of lunar eclipses.

As Gassendi is among the most literary of philosophers, so he is also among the most voluminous. Six volumes folio attest the vastness of his industry, no less than his erudition and versatility. These have been twice printed; once at Lyons in 1658 under the editorship of Montmort and Sorbière, and once at Florence in 1728. The first two volumes are occupied entirely with his *Syntagma Philosophicum;* the third contains his critical writings on Epicurus, Aristotle, Descartes, Fludd, and Lord Herbert, with some occasional pieces on certain problems of physics; the fourth, his *Institutio Astronomica*, and his *Commentarii de rebus celestibus;* the fifth, his commentary on the Tenth Book of Diogenes Lærtius, the biographies of Epicurus, Peiresc, Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, Peurbach, Regiomontanus, with some tracts on the value of Ancient Money, on the Roman Calendar, and on the theory of music; to all which is appended a large and prolix piece, entitled *Notitia Ecclesiæ Diniensis;* — the sixth volume contains his correspondence. The *Lives*, especially of Copernicus, Tycho, and Peiresc, have been justly admired. That of Peiresc has been repeatedly printed; it has also been translated into English. Gassendi was one of the first, after the revival of letters, who treated the *literature* of philosophy in a lively way. His writings of this kind, though too laudatory and somewhat diffuse, have great merit; they abound in those anecdotal details, natural yet not obvious reflections, and vivacious turns of thought, which made Gibbon style him, with some extravagance certainly, though it was true enough up to Gassendi's time — "le meilleur philosophe des

litterateurs, et le meilleur litterateur des philosophes." Gassendi wrote in Latin; it is to be regretted that he did not compose some of his works in French. There is little doubt that he would have given us another specimen of that happy philosophical style in which his countrymen have so signally excelled from Descartes' time downwards; as it is, his writings, as might be expected from the qualities of his mind, are perspicuous and lucid in an eminent degree; but the style is very diffuse, and, in many cases, cumbersome, a fault which it may be reasonably supposed would have been obviated if he had written in his vernacular. His illustrations and examples, especially in the leisurely exposition of the voluminous *Syntagma Philosophicum*, are often multiplied to tediousness, though generally apt and well selected. Instances both of the merits and faults in question may be seen in the parts of the *Syntagma* where he treats "de Sensibus *speciatim*," and (more briefly) in the chapter "de Instinctu Brutorum." [1]

The personal character of Gassendi must have been exceedingly attractive. Of his winning manners, agreeable social qualities, and modesty, there is a pleasing proof recorded by Sorbière, and pleasantly repeated by De Gerando. "Marivat having travelled from Paris to Grenoble in his company without suspecting his name, desired on arriving to be presented to the celebrated Gassendi. He was greatly surprised to recognize him in the amiable companion with whom he had conversed on the route. This behavior reminds us of that of Plato, when he returned from Syracuse into Greece." His temper and manners were such as became a philosopher, and a Christian philosopher rather than a disciple of Epicurus; whose precepts, if capable of being harmonized with virtue, are yet easily perverted to vice. It may be doubted whether any philosopher ever lived more

[1] Syntag. Phil. Physicæ, part iii., sect. iii., lib. vii.; viii., cap. v.

philosophically than Gassendi, if we may judge by the testimony of Sorbière in the preface to the *Opera Omnia*. His eulogium records virtues which make us love the man even more than we revere the philosopher; and with a trait or two from it we shall conclude this notice of his character. "When I consider his private life, I seem to see before me some anchorite, who, in the midst of a crowded city, has set up the severe rule of the desert; so heartily did he embrace a life of poverty, chaste celibacy, and obedience, though unconstrained by any vows. Contented with little, he envied none their riches; none the richer for the patronage of the wealthy, he dispensed whatever he received with a liberal hand. He was voluntarily abstemious, rarely touched flesh, generally subsisted on vegetables, and breakfasted and supped on oatmeal porridge." Sorbière pronounces a deserved eulogium on his modesty, humility, and benevolence.

The precise character and position of the philosophic system of Gassendi has, like that of so many other philosophers, been much debated. It is a topic which there is no space to discuss here, but which cannot be wholly passed by, since from misapprehension Gassendi has been treated with less than justice by eminent philosophical critics, and among the rest by Dugald Stewart in the "Preliminary Dissertation."

By critics in general, fifty years ago, he would have been regarded as a genuine precursor of the naked and undisguised sensational French philosophy of the last century; by other and later critics, he is represented as having taught a philosophy not very dissimilar in its main principles from that of Locke. Locke, indeed, is even supposed by some to have derived more from the acute Frenchman than he has allowed the generality of his readers to suspect. Of this a word or two presently.

Meantime, the truth with regard to Gassendi seems to be that, like many other philosophers who have written folios,

and produced their works at distant intervals and under very different circumstances, he has not been altogether consistent in the exhibition of himself. Assuredly his tone is very different when urging with so much vigor all the possible "objections" which ingenuity could discover to Descartes' *Meditations*, and when systematically developing his own doctrines in his *Syntagma Philosophicum*. "The main scope," says Dugald Stewart in the Preliminary Dissertation, "of Gassendi's argument against Descartes is to materialize that class of our ideas which the Lockists as well as the Cartesians consider as the exclusive objects of the power of *reflection*, and to show that these ideas are all ultimately resolvable into images or conceptions borrowed from things external." If we look *only* at the animadversions on Descartes, there is much to favor these observations. But then, again, as Hallam justly observes, if we examine the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, even the Proemial Book, even the Logic, but more especially the important chapters in the Physics "De Phantasiâ" and "De Intellectu," we cannot fail to perceive that this estimate is erroneous, and that Gassendi is very far indeed from resolving all the phenomena of mind into sensation. This Hallam has truly remarked, and has supplied a few extracts from the above chapters of Gassendi in proof. The explanation of the apparent discrepancies, this writer says, is difficult. "Whether he urged some of his objections against the Cartesian metaphysics with a regard to victory rather than truth, or, as would be the more candid and perhaps more reasonable hypothesis, he was induced by the acuteness of his great antagonist to review and reform his own opinions, I must leave to the philosophical reader." [1]

It seems highly probable that both explanations are correct. In accepting Mersenne's invitation, issued by Descartes' commands, to find as much fault as possible with the celebrated *Meditations* (which made such pretensions to

[1] Literature of Europe, Vol. iv. p. 203.

logical rigor), Gassendi would naturally be tempted to urge every objection to the uttermost; and would probably challenge the *proof* of assertions, when he thought it weak, not less where he agreed with the conclusions themselves than where he denied them. This seems to have been obviously his course in some cases.[1] In such a controversy the true position is apt often to be forgotten both by him who writes and by him who reads. Challenged to show the invalidity of the reasoning which is employed to support a given conclusion, the objector is apt to speak and to be interpreted as if he contended not only for the validity of his objections, but for an *opposite* conclusion from that of his opponent. This may or may not be. In Gassendi's case it is sometimes the conclusion as well as the reasoning, sometimes the reasoning only, to which he is opposed.

From Gassendi's "objections" his own *positive* opinions on the points in question are not always inferrible. We must look at his dogmatical explanations of his own views as a safer criterion, and we find these in the *Syntagma*. It must be added that a certain degree of personal feeling evidently gave sharpness to his criticisms on Descartes; and philosopher though he was, being still a mortal man, this could not but exert some influence. On the other hand, when writing his *Syntagma*, Gassendi was freed from all such bias; he was no longer the advocate, but the judge; he had to show, not merely that such reasoning on behalf of such and such conclusions was not valid, but *what* conclusions he held himself. He had also had the opportunity of reading all his great antagonist's "criticisms" on his *own* "criticisms," and doubtless profited by them; and lastly, though the interval, as Hallam says, between the controversy with Descartes and the commencement of the ponder-

[1] It must have been so when so severely challenging Descartes' *proof* of the immateriality of the soul, or of the existence of the material world, for Gassendi denied neither.

ous *Syntagma Philosophicum* was but brief — the dates being 1641 and 1642 — yet before its author had reached the chapters "De Phantasiâ" and "De Intellectu" (nearly one thousand closely printed folio columns from the commencement), he would have had abundant time to review any opinions of an earlier date, and profit by the discussions with his illustrious opponent.

Be this as it may, the chapter on the "Human Intellect" shows incontrovertibly that Gassendi was far removed from the sensationalists. While he maintains constantly his favorite maxim "that there is nothing in the intellect which has not been in the senses;" while he contends that the imaginative faculty, "phantasia," is the counterpart of sense; that like that, as it has to do with material images, it is itself material, and essentially the same both in men and brutes,— the chapter "De Intellectu" plainly proves that he could consistently mean nothing more than that "sensations" are the invariable and indispensable antecedents and conditions of the evolution of the phenomena of intellect; for he admits that the intellect, which he affirms to be "immaterial" — the most characteristic distinction of humanity — attains notions and truths of which no effort of sensation or imagination can give us the slightest apprehension.[1] He instances in the capacity of forming "general notions;" in the very conception of *universality* itself,[2] to which he says brutes, who partake as truly as men in the faculty he calls "phantasia," never attain; in the notion of God, whom he says we may *imagine* to be corporeal, but *understand* to be incorporeal;

[1] "Itaque est in nobis intellectionis species qua ratiocinando eo provehimur, ut aliquid *intelligamus, quod imaginari seu cujus habere obversantem imaginem, quantumcunque animi vireis contenderimus,* non possimus." — *De Intellectu,* cap. ii. Opera, Tom. ii., p. 383.

[2] "Non modo universalia, universaleisve notiones formamus, sed percipimus quoque ipsam rationem universalitatis." — Ib., p. 384.

and lastly in the "reflex actions" by which the mind makes its own phenomena and operations the objects of attention.[1]

His remarks on the last point — his very phraseology, "actiones reflexivæ," certainly remind one of Locke, and have suggested that Gassendi's system was the source of Locke's. It *was* so, exclaims Stewart, of the *false* system of Locke into which the sensational schools of France distorted that of the English philosopher. To this it seems sufficient to reply, as before, that Gassendi himself, in his more deliberate exhibition of his philosophy, does *not* belong to those schools. At the same time, whether Locke had ever studied the system of Gassendi is somewhat doubtful. That he was not, at all events, *conscious* of any signal obligations to Gassendi, may be inferred from the following reasons: — 1. Locke's distinct assertion, to Stillingfleet and others, that, right or wrong, his system had been the fruit of his own excogitation. 2. That if he had consciously borrowed from Gassendi, he, who was a model of honor and candor as a writer, would not have failed to acknowledge his obligations. 3. The very name of Gassendi scarcely occurs in all his writings;[2] and though it may be said that this silence was natural if conscious that he had *stolen*, it is inconsistent with his character that he should have so acted; the silence would have become a thief, but not John Locke. 4. He was no *helluo librorum*, and the *Syntagma* extends to two ponderous folios. It is true that the abridgment by Bernier in eight volumes (if such an abuse of the term may be allowed) was published in 1678, and this, Locke, who was certainly in habits of intercourse with Bernier at Paris

[1] Alterum est genus reflexarum actionum quibus intellectus seipsum, suasque functiones intelligit, ac speciatim se intelligere animadvertit. Videlicet hoc munus est omni facultate corporeâ superius. — *De Intellectu*, cap. ii., p. 384.

[2] He has just introduced his name in the controversy with Stillingfleet, and that is all.

in 1677, might have seen. 5. But, supposing him to have seen it, what then? The utmost that can be said is, that it is probable that the remarks on the reflex operations of the mind, and the terms "*actiones reflexivæ*" (used, however, by Gassendi not with a view to a classification of mental phenomena, *but incidentally, in proof of the mind's immateriality*) may have unconsciously suggested to Locke his second great division of ideas, and the phraseology in which he has couched it. But the observations themselves are far too scanty to have been of much service to Locke in constructing his general theory, still less in that elaborate and minute analysis of the "ideas of reflection," which constitutes the bulk of the "Essay." The whole of the two books on "Imagination" and "Intellect" in the *Syntagma* would not make above an eighth of Locke's "Essay," and the greater part of these is occupied with questions which Locke has expressly renounced as belonging to a hopeless psychology; as, for example, whether imagination be material or immaterial (Gassendi deciding for the former) — of how many kinds, or how, mechanically or physiologically, related to sensation — whether and in what sense it can be said to possess reason — whether it be identical with the similar faculty in brutes. Such questions, together with the history of opinions, Gassendi is as prone to discuss as Locke to decline them. The opinion of De Gerando, however, on the relations of Locke's philosophy to Gassendi's, is well entitled to attention.

JAMES CRICHTON.

JAMES CRICHTON, commonly known by the appellation of the Admirable Crichton, was born on the 19th of August, 1560.[1] His father was Robert Crichton, who, in conjunction with John Spence, executed the office of lord advocate; his mother was Elizabeth, the only daughter of Sir James Stewart of Beath, by Margaret, the eldest daughter of Lord Lindsay of Byres. It appears highly probable, if not certain, that by the father's side, he derived his lineage from Sir Robert Crichton of Sanquhar, ancestor of the earl of Dumfries; and his maternal grandfather, ancestor of the earl of Moray, was the son of Lord Avandale, who was descended from Murdac duke of Albany, and through him from Robert II. It is indeed to be recollected that the birth of the first Lord Avandale was illegitimate; but it is likewise to be recollected that he obtained letters of legitimation under the great seal. His grand-uncle Lord Methven was the third husband

[1] An Italian broadside, printed at Venice in 1580, states that he had completed the twentieth year of his age on the 19th of August. This curious document, which was lately discovered, and which affords some confirmation of the account which Manutius and Imperiali have given of Crichton's character and attainments, may be found in the appendix to the second edition of Mr. Tytler's *Life of the Admirable Crichton*, p. 289. Edinb. 1823, 12mo.

of Margaret Tudor, the relict of James IV. It is therefore sufficiently obvious that he was entitled to speak of his high descent; but his extraordinary endowments of mind conferred upon him much higher distinction than he could derive from any accidental circumstances of birth. The place of his birth is somewhat doubtful. According to one tradition, he was born in the castle of Cluny, situated on a small lake bearing the same name; but as the father did not acquire his estate in Perthshire till two years after the birth of James, his eldest son, this may be considered as entitled to less attention than another tradition, which represents him as having been born at Elliock in Dumfriesshire, the more ancient seat of the family. The estate of Cluny, which belonged to the bishopric of Dunkeld, was conveyed to the king's advocate by Robert Crichton, the last popish bishop of that wealthy see.

In the year 1570, when he had only attained the age of ten, he was sent to the university of St. Andrews, where he was entered at St. Salvator's College. According to Aldus Manutius, his father placed him under the tuition of Buchanan, Hepburn, Robertson, and Rutherford, who are all mentioned as very eminent persons. John Rutherford, whose name is sufficiently known, was provost of the college to which Crichton belonged. Buchanan, who was principal of St. Leonard's College, resigned his office about the time when he became a student; but, according to the statement of his Italian friend, he was partially educated along with the young king of Scotland; and Buchanan was appointed to the office of preceptor to the king when he quitted St. Andrews, in the year 1570. On the 20th of March, 1573, or, according to our present mode of computation, 1574, Crichton took the degree of A. B. He proceeded A. M. in the year 1575, and thus completed the regular course of study at the premature age of fifteen. In the university of St. Andrews, the candidates for the

higher degree were then distributed into circles, according to the comparative proficiency displayed in the course of their previous examinations. Each circle was likewise formed on the same principle. Of the thirty-six masters who took their degrees on this occasion, there were three circles; and the third name in the first circle is that of James Crichton. At the head of the list appears David Monypenny. It is highly probable that Crichton was the youngest of all those graduates; and as his proficiency was only excelled by two out of thirty-five, it is evident that he had already begun to distinguish himself by his extraordinary aptitude in the acquisition of knowledge.

As the king was six years younger than Crichton, they could not well participate in the same studies, although they could receive instructions from the same tutors. Crichton must have continued to devote himself with intense ardor to the pursuits of science as well as literature; for to a knowledge of many languages he added a familiar acquaintance with the philosophy and even the theology of the age. The power of genius is shown in the use of the materials which are placed within its reach; but there is no royal road to learning, which, if acquired to any extent, must be acquired by much labor and perseverance, although their particular degree must vary according to the quickness of apprehension and tenacity of memory belonging to various individuals.

Crichton may for some time have enjoyed the benefit of such able instruction; for he appears to have been still residing in Scotland towards the close of the year 1577. His subsequent movements are represented as being partly influenced by some domestic disagreements. As the father embraced the reformed doctrines, while the son adhered to the ancient superstition, disputes and reproaches could scarcely fail to intervene at a crisis of such high and general excitement. The young scholar repaired to France,

where he is said to have distinguished himself equally by his skill in literature and in arms. Of a marvellous disputation which he held in the university of Paris, there is an account which passes very currently, although it is only stamped with the authority of Sir Thomas Urquhart. According to this account, he affixed a programme in the most public places of the city, inviting all men of learning to meet him, after an interval of six weeks, at the College of Navarre, where he should "be ready to answer to what should be propounded to him concerning any science, liberal art, discipline, or faculty, practical or theoretic, not excluding the theological nor jurisprudential habits, though grounded but upon the testimonies of God and man, and that in any of these twelve languages, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, English, Dutch, Flemish, and Sclavonian, in either verse or prose, at the discretion of the disputant:"[1] in the mean time, as we are duly instructed, "the admirable Scot (for so from thenceforth he was called) minding more his hawking, hunting, tilting, vaulting, riding of well-managed horses, tossing of the pike, handling of the musket, flourishing of colors, dancing, fencing, swimming, jumping, throwing of the bar, playing at the tennis, balloon, or long-catch, and sometimes at the house-games of dice, cards, playing at the chess,

[1] Urquhart's Discovery of a most exquisite Jewel, p. 94. Lond. 1652, 8vo. — This writer is pleased to inform us that about a fortnight before the appointed day of meeting, some person, less acquainted with Crichton himself than with his reputation, subjoined the following sarcastic inscription to his programme on the gate of the Sorbonne: "If you would meet with this monster of perfection, to make search for him either in the taverne or bawdy-house, is the readiest way to find him." The hint for this part of the story is to all appearance borrowed from a work of mere fancy in which Boccalini relates that a similar *mordace facetia* was practised upon Crichton, not in Paris, but in Parnassus: "E chi lo vuol vedere, vada all' hosteria del Falcone, che li farà mostrato." (Ragguagli di Parnaso, tom. i. p. 181.)

billiards, trou-madam, and other such like chamber sports, singing, playing on the lute, and other musical instruments." But when the appointed hour arrived, he acquitted himself with stupendous learning and ability, having for the space of nine hours maintained his ground against the most eminent antagonists in all the faculties. The rector of the university concluded the ceremony by presenting him with a diamond ring and a purse full of gold. It would be a mere waste of criticism to enter into a minute examination of the narrative to which we have now referred. The details are sufficiently circumstantial, but they have much of the aspect of a downright romance; and such details from the knight of Cromarty would have required the strong confirmation of collateral evidence. It might perhaps be admitted with some degree of safety that Crichton was engaged in a public disputation at Paris, and that he acquitted himself with consummate ability; but as to his fluency in twelve languages, and his maintaining so long and powerful a contest, not merely with grammarians, rhetoricians, and philosophers, but even with theologians, canonists, and civilians, all these particulars must be received with extreme hesitation; and perhaps it may be considered as much more probable that such a disputation never took place at Paris but was merely fabricated from another, which took place at Venice.

The intellectual endowments of Crichton seem to have been equalled by his personal accomplishments. He is highly celebrated for his martial powers, and as a complete master in the use of the sword and spear. Some degree of military experience he must have acquired during his two years' service in the civil wars of France; but this term of service was apparently sufficient to gratify his youthful inclination for the life of a soldier; and he next directed his steps towards Italy, where he must have arrived in the year 1580. According to Dr. Mackenzie, he proceeded to Rome,

and there gave another demonstration of his talents for public disputation;[1] but this account is evidently destitute of all foundation, and the only authority alleged by its author is that of Boccalini, whose meaning is either completely misrepresented or completely misunderstood. Dempster has stated that he went to Genoa, attracted by the offer of a considerable salary; but in what capacity he appeared there, we are left to conjecture. Whatever might be his first place of residence in Italy, it is at least ascertained that he arrived at Venice before the close of the year 1580. He now addressed a Latin poem to the younger Aldus Manutius, a name highly celebrated in the annals of typography; and this laid the foundation of a literary friendship, which was not without considerable influence in perpetuating his fame. He likewise formed an intimate acquaintance with other men of letters, particularly with Sperone Speroni, Lorenzo Massa, and Giovanni Donati. An ode addressed to Massa, and another to Donati, are preserved among his literary reliques. But the friendship of Manutius was distinguished by a more than ordinary degree of zeal: he highly extolled Crichton when living, and deeply bewailed him when dead. To the notices which he has introduced into his edition of Cicero, we are in a great measure indebted for our knowledge of the young scholar's proceedings in the territory of Venice. His edition of the *Paradoxa* he inscribed "Nobilissimo juveni Jacoba Critonia Scoto;" and the dedication, dated on the first of June, 1581, contains a recital of some of those literary exploits which astonished the Italians.[2]

[1] Mackenzie's Lives of Scots Writers, vol. iii. p. 200. — From the very loose and erroneous account of Crichton which occurs in this work, was fabricated a separate tract published under the title of the *Life of James Crichton of Clunie, commonly called the Admirable Crichton.* Aberdeen, 1760, 8vo.

[2] The dedication of Aldus Manutius, together with the four Latin poems of Crichton, are reprinted in Graevius's edition of Cicero *De Officiis*, re. Amst. 1688, 8vo. They may likewise be found in

An oration which Crichton pronounced before the Doge and the nobility of Venice excited the admiration of his audience, by the eloquence of the composition, as well as by the gracefulness of the elocution, insomuch that the young orator was regarded as a person of the most extraordinary endowments. He afterwards engaged in various disputations on subjects of divinity, philosophy, and the mathematical sciences; and such was the reputation which he now acquired, that, during the remainder of his short career, he seems to have been viewed as one of the wonders of Italy. It has been thought a circumstance worthy of being recorded in the life of Mazzoni, celebrated among his countrymen for his powers of literary debate, that he thrice encountered Crichton at Venice, and overwhelmed him by the astonishing copiousness and subtilty of his arguments. If it was reckoned an honor for a man of high reputation to sustain a contest with so youthful an antagonist, we cannot fail to perceive the singular estimation in which that antagonist must have been held.

These intellectual exertions were succeeded by an infirm state of health, which continued for upwards of four months; and before he had completely recovered, he made an excursion to Padua, the seat of a flourishing university. The professors in all the different faculties were invited to meet him in the house of a person of rank; and there, in the midst of a numerous assembly, he exhibited new and striking proofs of the versatility of his genius. He commenced his performances with the recitation of an extemporaneous poem in celebration of Padua; a subject which was only then proposed to him, and which he treated in a manner that is described as very elegant. With much acuteness and

the *Biographia Britannica*, vol. iv. p. 452, and in the appendix to Mr. Tytler's *Life of the Admirable Crichton*, p. 292. Only two of the poems, the hexameters on Venice and the ode to Manutius, occur in the *Deliciæ Poetarum Scotorum*, tom. i. p. 268.

learning, he afterwards discussed various topics of science with the doctors who were there assembled; and it is particularly mentioned that he exposed many of the errors of Aristotle and his commentators. Having thus displayed his knowledge for the space of six hours, the final theme proposed to him was the praise of ignorance; and on this subject he pronounced an oration, which still further excited the admiration of his learned auditors. A similar exhibition was announced to be held in the bishop's palace, but, for some reason which is not plainly stated, it did not take place. The popular applause which attended such demonstrations of intellectual superiority, had too natural a tendency to excite envy, and to provoke detraction; nor did Crichton escape that lot which has been common to so many others. On his return to Venice, he was induced by the malignity of certain individuals, whom he does not mention by name, to publish a remarkable programme, which has been preserved by his friend Manutius. In order to expose the futility of their cavils, he undertook to refute innumerable errors of Aristotle, and of all the Latin philosophers, that is, all the schoolmen, both in their expositions of his doctrines, and in their disquisitions on subjects of theology, together with the errors of certain professors of mathematics, and to answer such objections as might be urged against him. He further gave his antagonists the option of selecting their topics of disputation from any other branch of science, whether publicly taught in the schools, or privately investigated by the most profound philosophers; and he undertook to return his answers, as the proponents should themselves determine, either according to the usual figures of logic, according to the secret doctrine of numbers, or mathematical figures, or in any one out of a hundred different species of verse. The challenge may appear sufficiently bold, if not arrogant; but unless it came from a person who was conscious of possessing very extraordinary powers of intellect, and who had repeatedly

applied to them a severe and unequivocal test, it could scarcely be viewed in any other light than as an indication of insanity. He appealed to a community which included many competent judges of such pretensions, and therefore could not hope to impose upon an unlearned multitude. The appointed place of meeting was the church of St. John and St. Paul; and there, for the space of three days, this young man sustained the arduous trial in a manner which fully justified his confidence in his own intellectual resources. His friend, Aldus Manutius, was a spectator of his triumphs upon this occasion; and though some allowances must doubtless be made for the warmth of friendship, and for an Italian taste in writing, it is still to be remembered that when he published his account, the event to which it referred was altogether recent, and he necessarily appealed to a cloud of living witnesses, who would have treated his panegyric with derision, if Crichton had obviously failed in supporting his own lofty pretensions.

After his departure from Venice, he betook himself to Mantua; and there, according to Urquhart's romantic narrative, he rendered himself very conspicuous by his valiant encounter with a fierce Italian gentleman, who had recently slain three antagonists. Crichton is said to have challenged this redoubtable champion, and after many efforts of mutual skill, to have brought the matter to this conclusion: "His right foot did beat the cadence of the blow that pierced the belly of this Italian; whose heart and throat being hit with the two former stroaks, these three franch bouts given in upon the back of the other; besides that, if lines were imagined drawn from the hand that livered them, to the places which were marked by them, they would represent a perfect isosceles triangle, with a perpendicular from the top angle, cutting the basis in the middle."[1] The learned knight had

[1] Urquhart's Discovery of a most exquisite Jewel, p. 90.

studied mathematics, and he seems to have been fully resolved that his knowledge should be turned to some account. This combat he has described in a very circumstantial manner; but, viewing his unsupported authority with no small degree of suspicion, we feel no inclination to repeat his martial details, which however, are not a little curious in themselves. But it is a fact confirmed by other evidence that Crichton was invited or attracted to the court of Mantua, and that the duke appointed him tutor to his son Vincenzo Gonzaga. Here, according to the knight of Cromarty, he displayed his dramatic talents as conspicuously as he had formerly displayed his learning and his prowess. In the space of five hours, he is said to have represented fifteen different characters, and to have supported each of them with marvellous effect. But his brilliant career was speedily to close. When he was one evening walking in the streets of Mantua with his lute in his hand, he was unexpectedly assailed by three individuals; and drawing his sword, he pressed upon them with so much skill and resolution, that the principal aggressor was impelled by his fears to discover himself as young Gonzaga. Crichton fell upon his knees, and entreated forgiveness for an act which evidently inferred no guilt; when the prince instantly pierced him through the body, and terminated the mortal existence of one of the most remarkable persons of the era to which he belonged.[1] This act of base

[1] Imperialis Musæum Historicum, p. 242. Venetiis, 1640, 4to. — In mentioning their first encounter, he uses the expression, "consulto, an casu, incertum;" nor are we in possession of any more specific information. With regard to the date, there is some degree of uncertainty. In the month of November, 1583, Manutius bewailed his young friend as already dead, and pointedly referred to the fatal third of July. Imperiali likewise states that he died on the third of July, 1583. On the other hand, Serassi, in his *Vita del Mazzoni*, p. 127, speaks of a poem written by James Crichton on the death of Cardinal Borromeo, which did not take place till the third of November, 1584. But for such a fact as this, the authority of Manutius

ferocity was perpetrated on the third of July, 1583, when Crichton had nearly completed the twenty-third year of his age.

The elegance of his person had procured him the admiration of those who were unable to estimate the powers of his mind. His countenance is described as beautiful; but his right eye was marked, if not somewhat disfigured, by a red spot, or as Manutius describes it, a red rose by which it was surrounded. His reputation as a scholar did not render him indifferent to the more superficial accomplishments of a gentleman; his address was courteous, and he was a proficient in dancing, as well as in the gymnastic and martial exercises to which youth of his condition were then addicted.

The unrivalled fame of this young scholar is certainly allied to romance; but, on the other hand, it is very difficult to imagine that it was not originally founded on some qualities which eminently distinguished him from other forward and aspiring youths, who at that period were sufficiently numerous in the more learned countries of Europe. A reputation so splendid, and so uniformly maintained, cannot reasonably be ascribed to a mere concurrence of accidental circumstances. The specimens of his Latin poetry which have been preserved do not indeed contain any thing very remarkable; but they are few in number, and were not published by himself; nor does his reputation depend upon one species of excellence. He is celebrated for the wonderful facility with which he composed verses, for his knowledge of ten or twelve different languages, for his acquaintance with the writings of the fathers, for his uncommon powers of memory, and for his promptitude and acuteness in public disputation. We must not therefore hastily

cannot well be called in question; and we must rather conclude that the poem was written by another James Crichton, or by some person who thought proper to adopt his name.

conclude that he "was in Italy considered one of those literary mountebanks who were numerous in that age;" or that his reputation chiefly depends on the romantic flights of Sir Thomas Urquhart, who wrote about seventy years after his death. Joseph Scaliger, who flourished at the same period with himself, who professes to have obtained his information in Italy, and who besides was not too prone to admiration, mentions Crichton as a prodigious genius, and, indeed, enumerates all the most essential qualifications that are commonly ascribed to him.[1] His testimony, which is entirely overlooked by the late Dr. Black, is certainly of considerable weight and importance. Crichton is likewise extolled in terms of the highest admiration, in a work published so early as the year 1609, by Dr. Abernethy, a native of Edinburgh, and a member of the university of Montpellier. The longer of the two poems which he wrote in celebration of his young countryman, commences with these verses: —

> O felix animi juvenis Chrichtone! vigore
> Ingenii volitante supra qui vectus in astra
> Humanam sortem, et mortalis culmen honoris,
> Seu placuit Musas colere, aut glomeramine campum
> Tundere cornipedis, pictisve ardescere in armis;
> Grandia sublimis nuper miracula mentis
> Monstrasti attonito, et rapuisti protinus orbi.

To the early testimonies which we have already produced, many others, somewhat more recent, might easily be added; and we are fully prepared to acquiesce in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, that of Crichton's history, "whatever we may suppress as surpassing credibility, yet we shall, upon incontestible authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies."[2] Dr. Kippis, who has written a copious account of

[1] Scaligerana, p. 58.

[2] Adventurer, No. 81.

this renowned youth, has legitimately applied the test of criticism to several of the early notices; and many of his strictures, particularly those on Urquhart and Mackenzie, every person of a sober judgment must admit to be too well founded. We have, however, placed no reliance on such authorities, but have derived all our materials from better sources. "He appears," says this biographer, "to have had a fine person, to have been adroit in his bodily exercises, to have possessed a peculiar facility in learning languages, to have enjoyed a remarkably quick and retentive memory, and to have excelled in a power of declamation, a fluency of speech, and a readiness of reply. His knowledge, likewise, was probably very uncommon for his years; and this, in conjunction with his other qualities, enabled him to shine in public disputation. But whether his knowledge and learning were accurate or profound, may justly be questioned; and it may equally be doubted whether he would have arisen to any extraordinary degree of eminence in the literary world. It will always be reflected upon with regret, that his early and untimely death prevented this matter from being brought to the test of experiment."[1] In all controversies, it is of the first importance to ascertain the real state of the question. In a youth of twenty-three, whatever superiority of intellect he may possess, we do not expect to find the erudition of Scaliger or Salmasius. Those who extol Crichton as a very extraordinary person do not necessarily suppose that his attainments exceeded the limits of human genius; but they may reasonably believe that in various departments of science and literature he arrived at a degree of proficiency wonderfully premature; that he evinced great energy of application, with unusual powers of memory; and that of the knowledge which he so rapidly acquired, he possessed so

[1] Biographia Britannica, vol. iv. p. 455.

ready a command, together with so much promptitude and acuteness of mental exertion, that he appeared as a prodigy among men of the ordinary standard of intellectual excellence.[1]

[1] "Ce fut," says Bayle, "l'un des plus extraordinaires prodiges d'esprit qu'on ait j'amais vus."—(Dictionnaire Historique et Critique, tom. i. p. 241.) This is scarcely exceeded by the panegyric of Imperiali. See Musæum Historicum, p. 241.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

By Macaulay

Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was, at the beginning of that century, a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the midland counties. Michael's abilities and attainments seem to have been considerable. He was so well acquainted with the contents of the volumes which he exposed to sale, that the country rectors of Staffordshire and Worcestershire thought him an oracle on points of learning. Between him and the clergy, indeed, there was a strong religious and political sympathy. He was a zealous churchman, and, though he qualified himself for municipal office by taking the oaths to the sovereigns in possession, was to the last a Jacobite in heart. At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born on the 18th of September, 1709. In the child the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterward distinguished the man were plainly discernible; great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper. He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to

believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains, and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scarred. He lost for a time the sight of one eye, and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity, that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way; but much that was dull to ordinary lads was interesting to Samuel. He read little Greek; for his proficiency in that language was not such that he could take much pleasure in the masters of attic poetry and eloquence. But he had left school a good Latinist, and he soon acquired, in the large and miscellaneous library of which he now had the command, an extensive knowledge of Latin literature. That Augustan delicacy of taste, which is the boast of the great public schools of England, he never possessed. But he was early familiar with some classical writers, who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton. He was particularly attracted by the works of the great restorers of learning. Once, while searching for some apples, he found a huge folio volume of Petrarch's works. The name excited his curiosity, and he eagerly devoured hun-

dreds of pages. Indeed, the diction and versification of his own Latin compositions show that he had paid at least as much attention to modern copies from the antique as to the original models.

While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined; his debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university; but a wealthy neighbor offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information he had picked up during many months of desultory, but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared, that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

At Oxford, Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner, panting for one-and-twenty, could have treated the academical authorities with more gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of

Pembroke, a gate now adorned with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendency. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader. Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's Messiah into Latin verse. The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts: but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731, he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the suffering of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university, his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons, and for setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes terrified people wh

not know him. At a dinner-table he would, in a fit of ence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He uld amaze a drawing-room by suddenly ejaculating a ause of the Lord's Prayer. He would conceive an unin- elligible aversion to a particular alley, and perform a great circuit rather than see the hateful place. He would set his heart on touching every post in the streets through which he walked. If by any chance he missed a post, he would go back a hundred yards and repair the omission. Under the influence of his disease, his senses became morbidly torpid, and his imagination morbidly active. At one time he would stand poring on the town-clock without being able to tell the hour. At another, he would distinctly hear his mother, who was many miles off, calling him by his name. But this was not the worst. A deep melancholy took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many men to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection; for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendor. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium: they reached him refracted, dulled, and discolored by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul; and, though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him.

With such infirmities of body and of mind, this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years in the midland counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and his early home, he had inherited some friends and acquired

others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honor by patronizing the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb, moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighborhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar-school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse; but subscriptions did not come in; and the volume never appeared.

While leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colors, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honor, the ad-

dresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding day till the lady died in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription, extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighborhood of his native town, and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away; and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his school-room must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry painted grandmother whom he called his Titty well qualified to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used, many years later, to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of Irene in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of parliament, a lord of the treasury, an embassador, a secre-

tary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular, such an author as Thomson, whose Seasons were in every library, such an author as Fielding, whose Pasquin had had a greater run than any drama since The Beggar's Opera, was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cook-shop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment measured with a scornful eye that athletic though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad, for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey, who was now residing in London, relieved his wants during this time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopher many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love

him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well on sixpenny worth of meat and a penny worth of bread at an alehouse near Drury Lane.

The effect of the privations and sufferings which he endured at this time was discernible to the last in his temper and his deportment. His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sate down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the tables of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and *Alamode* beefshops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty emboldened stupid and low-minded men to offer to him would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily the insolence which, while it was defensive was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, except Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of booksellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library.

About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in

London, he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent bookseller, who was proprietor and editor of the Gentleman's Magazine. That journal, just entering on the ninth year of its long existence, was the only periodical work in the kingdom which then had what would now be called a large circulation. It was, indeed, the chief source of parliamentary intelligence. It was not then safe, even during a recess, to publish an account of the proceedings of either House without some disguise. Cave, however, ventured to entertain his readers with what he called Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput. France was Blefuscu; London was Mildendo; pounds were sprugs; the Duke of Newcastle was the Nardac secretary of state; Lord Hardwicke was the Hurgo Hicrad; and William Pulteney was Wingul Pulnub. To write the speeches was, during several years, the business of Johnson. He was generally furnished with notes, meagre indeed, and inaccurate, of what had been said; but sometimes he had to find arguments and eloquence both for the ministry and for the opposition. He was himself a Tory, not from rational conviction — for his serious opinion was that one form of government was just as good or as bad as another — but from mere passion, such as inflamed the Capulets against the Montagues, or the Blues of the Roman circus against the Greens. In his infancy he had heard so much talk about the villainies of the Whigs, and the dangers of the Church, that he had become a furious partisan when he could scarcely speak. Before he was three he had insisted on being taken to hear Sacheverel preach at Lichfield cathedral, and had listened to the sermon with as much respect, and probably with as much intelligence, as any Staffordshire squire in the congregation. The work which had been begun in the nursery had been completed by the university. Oxford, when Johnson resided there, was the most Jacobitical place in England; and Pembroke was one

of the most Jacobitical colleges in Oxford. The prejudices which he brought up to London were scarcely less absurd than those of his own Tom Tempest. Charles II. and James II. were two of the best kings that ever reigned. Laud — a poor creature who never did, said, or wrote any thing indicating more than the ordinary capacity of an old woman — was a prodigy of parts and learning, over whose tomb Art and Genius still continued to weep. Hampden deserved no more honorable name than that of "the zealot of rebellion." Even the ship-money, condemned not less decidedly by Falkland and Clarendon than by the bitterest Roundheads, Johnson would not pronounce to have been an unconstitutional impost. Under a government the mildest that had ever been known in the world — under a government which allowed to the people an unprecedented liberty of speech and action — he fancied that he was a slave; he assailed the ministry with obloquy which refuted itself, and regretted the lost freedom and happiness of those golden days in which a writer who had taken but one tenth part of the license allowed to him would have been pilloried, mangled with the shears, whipped at the cart's-tail, and flung into a noisome dungeon to die. He hated dissenters and stockjobbers, the excise and the army, septennial parliaments and continental connections. He long had an aversion to the Scotch — an aversion of which he could not remember the commencement, but which, he owned, had probably originated in his abhorrence of the conduct of the nation during the Great Rebellion. It is easy to guess in what manner debates on great party questions were likely to be reported by a man whose judgment was so much disordered by party spirit. A show of fairness was indeed necessary to the prosperity of the Magazine; but Johnson long afterward owned that, though he had saved appearances, he had taken care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it; and, in fact, every passage which has lived —

every passage which bears the marks of his higher faculties — is put into the mouth of some member of the opposition.

A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labors, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London, had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal had described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome. Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's Satires and Epistles had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common — much more, certainly, than between Pope and Horace.

Johnson's *London* appeared without his name in May, 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem; but the sale was rapid and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honor of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He made inquiries about the author of *London*. Such a man, he said, could not long be concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar-school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed, and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

It does not appear that these two men — the most emi-

nent writer of the generation which was going out, and the most eminent writer of the generation which was coming in — ever saw each other. They lived in very different circles — one surrounded by dukes and earls, the other by starving pamphleteers and index-makers. Among Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket, who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober, and who was at last run over by a hackney-coach when he was drunk; Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who, instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sate cross-legged; and the penitent impostor, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in an humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish rabbis and the Christian fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the city. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom at this time Johnson consorted, was Richard Savage, an earl's son, a shoemaker's apprentice, and had seen life in all its forms, — who had feasted among blue ribbons in Saint James's Square, and had lain with fifty pounds' weight of irons on his legs in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice. He now lived by begging. He dined on venison and champagne whenever he had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the piazza of Covent Garden in warm weather, and, in cold weather, as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass-house. Yet, in his

misery, he was still an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation, had seen the leaders of opposition without the mask of patriotism, and had heard the prime minister roar with laughter and tell stories not over decent. During some months Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave, Savage went to the west of England, lived there as he had lived everywhere, and, in 1743, died, penniless and heart-broken, in Bristol jail.

Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary character, and his not less extraordinary adventures, a life of him appeared widely different from the catchpenny lives of eminent men which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was indeed deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work with all its faults was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

The *Life of Savage* was anonymous; but it was well known in literary circles that Johnson was the writer. During the three years which followed, he produced no important work; but he was not, and indeed could not be, idle. The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of

preparing a *Dictionary of the English Language*, in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

The Prospectus of the Dictionary he addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield. Chesterfield had long been celebrated for the politeness of his manners, the brilliancy of his wit, and the delicacy of his taste. He was acknowledged to be the finest speaker in the House of Lords. He had recently governed Ireland, at a momentous conjuncture, with eminent firmness, wisdom, and humanity; and he had since become Secretary of State. He received Johnson's homage with the most winning affability, and requited it with a few guineas, bestowed doubtless in a very graceful manner, but was by no means desirous to see all his carpets blackened with the London mud, and his soups and wines thrown to right and left over the gowns of fine ladies and the waistcoats of fine gentlemen, by an absent, awkward scholar, who gave strange starts and uttered strange growls, who dressed like a scarecrow, and ate like a cormorant. During some time Johnson continued to call on his patron, but after being repeatedly told by the porter that his lordship was not at home, took the hint, and ceased to present himself at the inhospitable door.

Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his Dictionary by the end of 1750, but it was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labor of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is in truth not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet. The couplets in which

the fall of Wolsey is described, though lofty and sonorous, are feeble when compared with the wonderful lines which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus, the laurels on the door-posts, the white bull stalking toward the Capitol, the statues rolling down from their pedestals, the flatterers of the disgraced minister running to see him dragged with a hook through the streets, and to have a kick at his carcass before it is hurled into the Tiber. It must be owned, too, that in the concluding passage the Christian moralist has not made the most of his advantages, and has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his pagan model. On the other hand, Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

For the copyright of the *Vanity of Human Wishes* Johnson received only fifteen guineas.

A few days after the publication of this poem, his tragedy, begun many years before, was brought on the stage. His pupil, David Garrick, had, in 1741, made his appearance on a humble stage in Goodman's Fields, had at once risen to the first place among actors, and was now, after several years of almost uninterrupted success, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The relation between him and his old preceptor was of a very singular kind. They repelled each other strongly, and yet attracted each other strongly. Nature had made them of very different clay; and circumstances had fully brought out the natural peculiarities of both. Sudden prosperity had turned Garrick's head. Continued adversity had soured Johnson's temper. Johnson saw with more envy than became so great a man the villa, the plate, the china, the Brussels carpet, which the little mimic had got by repeating, with grimaces and gesticulations, what wiser men had written; and the exquisitely sensitive van-

ity of Garrick was galled by the thought that, while all the rest of the world was applauding him, he could obtain from one morose cynic, whose opinion it was impossible to despise, scarcely any compliment not acidulated with scorn. Yet the two Lichfield men had so many early recollections in common, and sympathized with each other on so many points on which they sympathized with nobody else in the vast population of the capital, that, though the master was often provoked by the monkey-like impertinence of the pupil, and the pupil by the bearish rudeness of the master, they remained friends till they were parted by death. Garrick now brought *Irene* out, with alterations sufficient to displease the author, yet not sufficient to make the piece pleasing to the audience. The public, however, listened, with little emotion, but with much civility, to five acts of monotonous declamation. After nine representations the play was withdrawn. It is, indeed, altogether unsuited to the stage, and, even when perused in the closet, will be found hardly worthy of the author. He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be. A change in the last syllable of every other line would make the versification of the *Vanity of Human Wishes* closely resemble the versification of *Irene*. The poet, however, cleared, by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright of his tragedy, about three hundred pounds, then a great sum in his estimation.

About a year after the representation of *Irene*, he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the Tatler, and by the still more brilliant success of the Spectator. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival Addison. The Lay Monastery, the Censor, the Freethinker, the Plain Dealer, the Champion, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature; and they are now to be found only

in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of the Spectator appeared the first number of the *Rambler*. From March 1750 to March 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

From the first, the *Rambler* was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal, if not superior, to the Spectator. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Dodington, among whose many faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Dodington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederic, two of his Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing-office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester house. But these overtures seem to have been very coldly received. Johnson had had enough of the patronage of the great to last him all his life, and was not disposed to haunt any other door as he had haunted the door of Chesterfield.

By the public the *Rambler* was at first very coldly received. Though the price of a number was only twopence, the sale did not amount to five hundred. The profits were therefore very small. But as soon as the flying leaves were collected and reprinted, they became popular. The author lived to see thirteen thousand copies spread over England alone. Separate editions were published for the Scotch and Irish markets. A large party pronounced the style perfect, so absolutely perfect that in some essays it would be impossible for the writer himself to alter a single word for the better. Another party, not less numerous, vehemently accused him of having corrupted the purity of the English tongue. The best critics admitted that his diction was too

monotonous, too obviously artificial, and now and then turgid even to absurdity. But they did justice to the acuteness of his observations on morals and manners, to the constant precision and frequent brilliancy of his language, to the weighty and magnificent eloquence of many serious passages, and to the solemn yet pleasing humor of some of the lighter papers. On the question of precedence between Addison and Johnson, a question which, seventy years ago, was much disputed, posterity has pronounced a decision from which there is no appeal. Sir Roger, his chaplain and his butler, Will Wimble and Will Honeycomb, the Vision of Mirza, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Everlasting Club, the Dunmow Flitch, the Loves of Hilpah and Shalum, the Visit to the Exchange, and the Visit to the Abbey are known to everybody. But many men and women, even of highly cultivated minds, are unacquainted with Squire Bluster and Mrs. Busy, Quisquilius and Venustulus, the Allegory of Wit and Learning, the Chronicle of the Revolutions of a Garret, and the sad fate of Aningait and Ajut.

The last *Rambler* was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physician. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning, stooping to every drudgery, and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities, which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her. He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre, or the judgment of the Monthly Review. The chief support

which had sustained him through the most arduous labor of his life, was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his Dictionary. She was gone; and, in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years, the *Dictionary* was at length complete.

It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the Prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which he had so cruelly wounded. Since the Rambler had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called The World, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of the World, the *Dictionary* was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final. His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The *Dictionary* came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to

struggle so forcibly and pathetically, that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears.

The public, on this occasion, did Johnson full justice, and something more than justice. The best lexicographer may well be content, if his productions are received by the world with cold esteem. But Johnson's *Dictionary* was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited. It was indeed the first dictionary which could be read with pleasure. The definitions show so much acuteness of thought and command of language, and the passages quoted from poets, divines, and philosophers, are so skilfully selected, that a leisure hour may always be very agreeably spent in turning over the pages. The faults of the book resolve themselves, for the most part, into one great fault. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language except English, which, indeed, as he wrote it, was scarcely a Teutonic language; and thus he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

The *Dictionary*, though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. The fifteen hundred guineas which the booksellers had agreed to pay him, had been advanced and spent before the last sheets issued from the press. It is painful to relate that, twice in the course of the year which followed the publication of this great work, he was arrested and carried to spunging-houses, and that he was twice indebted for his liberty to his excellent friend Richardson. It was still necessary for the man who had been formally saluted by the highest authority as Dictator of the English language to supply his wants by constant toil. He abridged his *Dictionary*. He proposed to bring out an edition of Shakspeare by subscription; and many subscribers sent in their names, and laid down their money; but he soon found the task so little to his taste,

that he turned to more attractive employments. He contributed many papers to a new monthly journal, which was called the Literary Magazine. Few of these papers have much interest; but among them was the very best thing that he ever wrote, a masterpiece both of reasoning and of satirical pleasantry, the review of Jenyns's Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil.

In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays, entitled *The Idler*. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. *The Idler* may be described as a second part of the *Rambler*, somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

While Johnson was busied with his Idlers, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely out of his small means, to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain; for the book was *Rasselas*.

The success of *Rasselas* was great, though such ladies as Miss Lydia Languish must have been greviously disappointed when they found that the new volume from the circulating library was little more than a dissertation on the author's favorite theme, the *Vanity of Human Wishes;* that the Prince of Abyssinia was without a mistress, and the Princess without a lover; and that the story set the hero and the heroine down exactly where it had taken them up. The style was the subject of much eager controversy. The Monthly Review and the Critical Review took different

sides. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use a word of six, and who could not make a waiting woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendor. And both the censure and the praise were merited.

About the plan of *Rasselas* little was said by the critics; and yet the faults of the plan might seem to invite severe criticism. Johnson has frequently blamed Shakspeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place, and for ascribing to one age or nation the manners and opinions of another. Yet Shakspeare has not sinned in this way more grievously than Johnson. Rasselas and Imlac, Nekayah and Pekuah, are evidently meant to be Abyssinians of the eighteenth century; for the Europe which Imlac describes is the Europe of the eighteenth century; and the inmates of the Happy Valley talk familiarly of that law of gravitation which Newton discovered, and which was not fully received even at Cambridge till the eighteenth century. What a real company of Abyssinians would have been may be learned from Bruce's Travels. But Johnson, not content with turning filthy savages, ignorant of their letters, and gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows, into philosophers as eloquent and enlightened as himself or his friend Burke, and into ladies as highly accomplished as Mrs. Lennox or Mrs. Sheridan, transferred the whole domestic system of England to Egypt. Into a land of harems, a land of polygamy, a land where women are married without ever being seen, he introduced the flirtations and jealousies of our ballrooms. In a land where there is boundless liberty of divorce, wedlock is described as the indissoluble compact. "A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought to-

gether by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of each other. Such," says Rasselas, "is the common process of marriage." Such it may have been, and may still be, in London, but assuredly not at Cairo. A writer who was guilty of such improprieties had little right to blame the poet who made Hector quote Aristotle, and represented Julio Romano as flourishing in the days of the oracle of Delphi.

By such exertions as have been described, Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate *Dictionary*, he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favorite resource of Whig financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the commissioners of excise in language so coarse, that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne; and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends, and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous. Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to

Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters; and Johnson was one of the most eminent and one of the most needy men of letters in Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence, to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

One laborious task indeed he had bound himself to perform. He had received large subscriptions for his promised edition of Shakspeare; he had lived on those subscriptions during some years; and he could not without disgrace omit to perform his part of the contract. His friends repeatedly exhorted him to make an effort; and he repeatedly resolved to do so. But, notwithstanding their exhortations and his resolutions, month followed month, year followed year, and nothing was done. He prayed fervently against his idleness; he determined, as often as he received the sacrament, that he would no longer doze away and trifle away his time; but the spell under which he lay resisted prayer and sacrament. His private notes at this time are made up of self-reproaches. "My indolence," he wrote on Easter eve in 1764, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year." Easter 1765 came, and found him still in the same state. "My time," he wrote, "has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me." Happily for his honor, the charm which held him captive was at length broken by no gentle or friendly hand. He had been weak

enough to pay serious attention to a story about a ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane, and had actually gone himself, with some of his friends, at one in the morning, to St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, in the hope of receiving a communication from the perturbed spirit. But the spirit, though adjured with all solemnity, remained obstinately silent; and it soon appeared that a naughty girl of eleven had been amusing herself by making fools of so many philosophers. Churchill, who, confident in his powers, drunk with popularity, and burning with party spirit, was looking for some man of established fame and Tory politics to insult, celebrated the Cock Lane Ghost in three cantos, nicknamed Johnson Pomposo, asked where the book was which had been so long promised and so liberally paid for, and directly accused the great moralist of cheating. This terrible word proved effectual; and in October, 1765, appeared, after a delay of nine years, the *New Edition of Shakspeare.*

This publication saved Johnson's character for honesty, but added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning. The preface, though it contains some good passages, is not in his best manner. The most valuable notes are those in which he had an opportunity of showing how attentively he had during many years observed human life and human nature. The best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius. Nothing so good is to be found even in Wilhelm Meister's admirable examination of Hamlet. But here praise must end. It would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless edition of any great classic. The reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation, or one ingenious and satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators. Johnson had, in his Prospectus, told the world that he was peculiarly fitted for the task which he had undertaken, because he had, as a lexicographer, been

under the necessity of taking a wider view of the English language than any of his predecessors. That his knowledge of our literature was extensive is indisputable. But, unfortunately, he had altogether neglected that very part of our literature with which it is especially desirable that an editor of Shakspeare should be conversant. It is dangerous to assert a negative. Yet little will be risked by the assertion, that in the two folio volumes of the *English Dictionary*, there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age, except Shakspeare and Ben. Even from Ben the quotations are few. Johnson might easily, in a few months, have made himself well acquainted with every old play that was extant. But it never seems to have occurred to him that this was a necessary preparation for the work which he had undertaken. He would doubtless have admitted, that it would be the height of absurdity in a man who was not familiar with the works of Æschylus and Euripides, to publish an edition of Sophocles. Yet he ventured to publish an edition of Shakspeare, without having ever in his life, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Decker, Webster, Marlow, Beaumont, or Fletcher. His detractors were noisy and scurrilous. Those who most loved and honored him, had little to say in praise of the manner in which he had discharged the duty of a commentator. He had, however, acquitted himself of a debt which had long lain heavy on his conscience, and he sank back into the repose from which the sting of satire had roused him. He long continued to live upon the fame which he had already won. He was honored by the University of Oxford with a Doctor's degree, by the Royal Academy with a professorship, and by the King with an interview, in which his Majesty most graciously expressed a hope that so excellent a writer would not cease to write. In the interval, however, between 1765 and 1775, Johnson published only two or three political tracts, the

longest of which he could have produced in forty-eight hours, if he had worked as he worked on the *Life of Savage* and on *Rasselas*.

But, though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without a parallel. His colloquial talents were indeed of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humor, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of the *Rambler*. But in his talk there were no pompous triads, and little more than a fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation*. All was simplicity, ease, and vigor. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences, with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down to his desk, prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally. To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject, on a fellow-passenger in a stage-coach, or on the person who sate at the same table with him in an eating-house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball

that he threw. Some of these, in 1764, formed themselves into a club, which gradually became a formidable power in the commonwealth of letters. The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunk-maker and the pastry-cook. Nor shall we think this strange, when we consider what great and various talents and acquirements met in the little fraternity. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature, Reynolds of the arts, Burke of political eloquence and political philosophy. There, too, were Gibbon, the greatest historian, and Jones, the greatest linguist, of the age. Garrick brought to the meeting his inexhaustible pleasantry, his incomparable mimicry, and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Among the most constant attendants were two high-born and high-bred gentlemen, closely bound together by friendship, but of widely different characters and habits: Bennet Langton, distinguished by his skill in Greek literature, by the orthodoxy of his opinions, and by the sanctity of his life; and Topham Beauclerk, renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste, and his sarcastic wit. To predominate over such a society was not easy. Yet even over such a society Johnson predominated. Burke might indeed have disputed the supremacy to which others were under the necessity of submitting. But Burke, though not generally a very patient listener, was content to take the second part when Johnson was present; and the club itself, consisting of so many eminent men, is to this day popularly designated as Johnson's club.

Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an hon-

orable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humor, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolater. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger plants. He must have fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitfield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned; and Boswell was eternally catechizing him on all sorts of subjects, and sometimes propounded such questions as, "What would you do, Sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water drinker and Boswell was a winebibber, and indeed little better than an habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits of passion, in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master: the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends

ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practised in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say something remarkable, and to fill quarto note-books with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials out of which was afterwards constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world.

Soon after the club began to exist, Johnson formed a connection less important indeed to his fame, but much more important to his happiness, than his connection with Boswell. Henry Thrale, one of the most opulent brewers in the kingdom, a man of sound and cultivated understanding, rigid principles, and liberal spirit, was married to one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they may, are always agreeable. In 1765 the Thrales became acquainted with Johnson, and the acquaintance ripened fast into friendship. They were astonished and delighted by the brilliancy of his conversation. They were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated preferred their house to any other in London. Even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilized society, his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, the strange way in which he put on his clothes, the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his dinner, his fits of melancholy, his fits of anger, his frequent rudeness, his occasional ferocity, increased the interest which his new associates took in him. For these things were the cruel marks left behind by a life which had been one long conflict with disease and with adversity. In a vulgar hack writer, such oddities would have excited only disgust. But in a man of genius, learning, and virtue, their effect was to add

pity to admiration and esteem. Johnson soon had an apartment at the brewery in Southwark, and a still more pleasant apartment at the villa of his friends on Streatham Common. A large part of every year he passed in those abodes, abodes which must have seemed magnificent and luxurious indeed, when compared with the dens in which he had generally been lodged. But his chief pleasures were derived from what the astronomer of his Abyssinian tale called "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Mrs. Thrale rallied him, soothed him, coaxed him, and, if she sometimes provoked him by her flippancy, made ample amends by listening to his reproofs with angelic sweetness of temper. When he was diseased in body and in mind, she was the most tender of nurses. No comfort that wealth could purchase, no contrivance that womanly ingenuity, set to work by womanly compassion, could devise, was wanting to his sick room. He requited her kindness by an affection pure as the affection of a father, yet delicately tinged with a gallantry, which, though awkward, must have been more flattering than the attentions of a crowd of the fools who gloried in the names, now obsolete, of Buck and Maccaroni. It should seem that a full half of Johnson's life, during about sixteen years, was passed under the roof of the Thrales. He accompanied the family sometimes to Bath, and sometimes to Brighton, once to Wales, and once to Paris. But he had at the same time a house in one of the narrow and gloomy courts on the north of Fleet Street. In the garrets was his library, a large and miscellaneous collection of books, falling to pieces and begrimmed with dust. On a lower floor he sometimes, but very rarely, regaled a friend with a plain dinner, a veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinage, and a rice pudding. Nor was the dwelling uninhabited during his long absences. It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At the head of the establishment Johnson had placed an old lady named Wil-

liams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But, in spite of her murmurs and reproaches he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who was generally addressed as Miss Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor named Levett, who bled and dosed coal-heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this strange menagerie. All these poor creatures were at constant war with each other, and with Johnson's negro servant Frank. Sometimes, indeed, they transferred their hostilities from the servant to the master, complained that a better table was not kept for them, and railed or maundered till their benefactor was glad to make his escape to Streatham, or to the Mitre Tavern. And yet he, who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent any thing which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller, or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who, but for his bounty, must have gone to the workhouse, insults more provoking than those for which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. Year after year Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins, Polly and Levett, continued to torment him and to live upon him.

The course of life which has been described was interrupted in Johnson's sixty-fourth year by an important event. He had early read an account of the Hebrides, and had been much interested by learning that there was so near him a land peopled by a race which was still as rude and simple as in the Middle Ages. A wish to become intimately acquainted with a state of society so utterly unlike all that he had ever seen frequently crossed his mind. But it

is not probable that his curiosity would have overcome his habitual sluggishness, and his love of the smoke, the mud, and the cries of London, had not Boswell importuned him to attempt the adventure, and offered to be his squire. At length, in August, 1773, Johnson crossed the Highland line, and plunged courageously into what was then considered by most Englishmen as a dreary and perilous wilderness. After wandering about two months through the Celtic region, sometimes in rude boats which did not protect him from the rain, and sometimes on small shaggy ponies which could hardly bear his weight, he returned to his old haunts with a mind full of new images and new theories. During the following year he employed himself in recording his adventures. About the beginning of 1775, his *Journey to the Hebrides* was published, and was, during some weeks, the chief subject of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature. The book is still read with pleasure. The narrative is entertaining; the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are always ingenious; and the style, though too stiff and pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than that of his early writings. His prejudice against the Scotch had at length become little more than matter of jest; and whatever remained of the old feeling had been effectually removed by the kind and respectful hospitality with which he had been received in every part of Scotland. It was, of course, not to be expected that an Oxonian Tory should praise the Presbyterian polity and ritual, or that an eye accustomed to the hedgerows and parks of England should not be struck by the bareness of Berwickshire and East Lothian. But even in censure Johnson's tone is not unfriendly. The most enlightened Scotchmen, with Lord Mansfield at their head, were well pleased. But some foolish and ignorant Scotchmen were moved to anger by a little unpalatable truth which was mingled with much eulogy, and assailed him whom they

chose to consider as the enemy of their country with libels much more dishonorable to their country than any thing that he had ever said or written. They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the magazines, sixpenny pamphlets, five-shilling books. One scribbler abused Johnson for being blear-eyed; another for being a pensioner; a third informed the world that one of the Doctor's uncles had been convicted of felony in Scotland, and had found that there was in that country one tree capable of supporting the weight of an Englishman. Macpherson, whose Fingal had been proved in the *Journey* to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane. The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms, and walked about during some time, with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace."

Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry; and when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But when he took his pen in his hand, his whole character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNichols, and Hendersons did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the

reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNichol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter.

"Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendre tecum."

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock, which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apothegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.

Unhappily, a few months after the appearance of the *Journey to the Hebrides*, Johnson did what none of his envious assailants could have done, and, to a certain extent, succeeded in writing himself down. The disputes between England and her American colonies had reached a point at which no amicable adjustment was possible. Civil war was evidently impending; and the ministers seem to have thought that the eloquence of Johnson might, with advantage, be employed to inflame the nation against the opposition here, and against the rebels beyond the Atlantic. He had already written two or three tracts in defence of the foreign and domestic policy of the government; and those tracts, though hardly worthy of him, were much superior to the crowd of pamphlets which lay on the counters of Almon and Stockdale. But his *Taxation No Tyranny* was a pitiable failure. The

very title was a silly phrase, which can have been recommended to his choice by nothing but a jingling alliteration which he ought to have despised. The arguments were such as boys use in debating societies. The pleasantry was as awkward as the gambols of a hippopotamus. Even Boswell was forced to own that, in this unfortunate piece, he could detect no trace of his master's powers. The general opinion was, that the strong faculties which had produced the *Dictionary* and the *Rambler* were beginning to feel the effect of time and of disease, and that the old man would best consult his credit by writing no more.

But this was a great mistake. Johnson had failed, not because his mind was less vigorous than when he wrote *Rasselas* in the evenings of a week, but because he had foolishly chosen, or suffered others to choose for him, a subject such as he would at no time have been competent to treat. He was in no sense a statesman. He never willingly read, or thought, or talked about affairs of state. He loved biography, literary history, the history of manners; but political history was positively distasteful to him. The question at issue between the colonies and the mother country was a question about which he had really nothing to say. He failed, therefore, as the greatest men must fail when they attempt to do that for which they are unfit; as Burke would have failed if Burke had tried to write comedies like those of Sheridan; as Reynolds would have failed if Reynolds had tried to paint landscapes like those of Wilson. Happily, Johnson soon had an opportunity of proving most signally that his failure was not to be ascribed to intellectual decay.

On Easter eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon him. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with

much civility. They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downward, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task, a task for which he was preëminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had derived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed; from old Grub Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honorable kind to Pope. The biographer, therefore, sate down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes — small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

The *Lives of the Poets* are, on the whole, the best of Johnson's works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied; for, however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They therefore generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from

the alloy; and, at the very worst, they mean something, a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has no pretensions.

Savage's Life Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that life, will turn to the other lives, will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circumstances, he had written little and had talked much. When, therefore, he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the *Journey to the Hebrides*, and in the *Lives of the Poets* is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader.

Among the *Lives* the best are perhaps those of Cowley, Dryden, and Pope. The very worst is, beyond all doubt, that of Gray.

This great work at once became popular. There was, indeed, much just and much unjust censure: but even those who were loudest in blame were attracted by the book in spite of themselves. Malone computed the gains of the publishers at five or six thousand pounds. But the writer was very poorly remunerated. Intending at first to write very short prefaces, he had stipulated for only two hundred guineas. The booksellers, when they saw how far his performance had surpassed his promise, added only another hundred. Indeed, Johnson, though he did not despise, or affect to despise money, and though his strong sense and long experience ought to have qualified him to protect his own interests, seems to have been singularly unskilful and unlucky in his literary bargains. He was generally reputed the first English writer of his time. Yet several writers of his time sold their copyrights for sums such as he

never ventured to ask. To give a single instance, Robertson received four thousand five hundred pounds for the History of Charles V., and it is no disrespect to the memory of Robertson to say that the History of Charles V. is both a less valuable and less amusing book than the *Lives of the Poets*.

Johnson was now in his seventy-second year. The infirmities of age were coming fast upon him. That inevitable event, of which he never thought without horror, was brought near to him; and his whole life was darkened by the shadow of death. He had often to pay the cruel price of longevity. Every year he lost what could never be replaced. The strange dependents to whom he had given shelter, and to whom, in spite of their faults, he was strongly attached by habit, dropped off one by one; and, in the silence of his home, he regretted even the noise of their scolding matches. The kind and generous Thrale was no more; and it would have been well if his wife had been laid beside him. But she survived to be the laughing-stock of those who had envied her, and to draw from the eyes of the old man who had loved her beyond any thing in the world, tears far more bitter than he would have shed over her grave. With some estimable, and many agreeable qualities, she was not made to be independent. The control of a mind more steadfast than her own was necessary to her respectability. While she was restrained by her husband, a man of sense and firmness, indulgent to her taste in trifles, but always the undisputed master of his house, her worst offences had been impertinent jokes, white lies, and short fits of petishness ending in sunny good-humor. But he was gone; and she was left an opulent widow of forty, with strong sensibility, volatile fancy, and slender judgment. She soon fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could discover any thing to admire. Her pride, and perhaps some better feelings, struggled hard against this

degrading passion. But the struggle irritated her nerves, soured her temper, and at length endangered her health. Conscious that her choice was one which Johnson could not approve, she became desirous to escape from his inspection. Her manner toward him changed. She was sometimes cold and sometimes petulant. She did not conceal her joy when he left Streatham: she never pressed him to return; and, if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him that he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and, with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left forever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and evil days which still remained to him were to run out. Here, in June, 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which, however, he recovered, and which does not appear to have at all impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron and the two pictures in Hamlet. He vehemently said that he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She, meanwhile, fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade

parties at Milan, that the great man, with whose name hers is inseparably associated, had ceased to exist.

He had, in spite of much mental and much bodily affliction, clung vehemently to life. The feeling described in that fine but gloomy paper which closes the series of his Idlers seemed to grow stronger in him as his last hour drew near. He fancied that he should be able to draw his breath more easily in a southern climate, and would probably have set out for Rome and Naples but for his fear of the expense of the journey. That expense, indeed, he had the means of defraying; for he had laid up about two thousand pounds, the fruit of labors which had made the fortune of several publishers. But he was unwilling to break in upon this hoard, and he seems to have wished even to keep its existence a secret. Some of his friends hoped that the government might be induced to increase his pension to six hundred pounds a year, but this hope was disappointed, and he resolved to stand one English winter more. That winter was his last. His legs grew weaker; his breath grew shorter; the fatal water gathered fast, in spite of incisions which he, courageous against pain, but timid against death, urged his surgeons to make deeper and deeper. Though the tender care which had mitigated his sufferings during months of sickness at Streatham was withdrawn, he was not left desolate. The ablest physicians and surgeons attended him, and refused to accept fees from him. Burke parted from him with deep emotion. Windham sate much in the sick room, arranged the pillows, and sent his own servant to watch at night by the bed. Frances Burney, whom the old man had cherished with fatherly kindness, stood weeping at the door; while Langton, whose piety eminently qualified him to be an adviser and comforter at such a time, received the last pressure of his friend's hand within. When at length the moment, dreaded through so many years, came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind.

His temper became unusually patient and gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God, and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died on the 13th of December, 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian — Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

Since his death the popularity of his works — the *Lives of the Poets*, and, perhaps, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, excepted — has greatly diminished. His *Dictionary* has been altered by editors till it can scarcely be called his. An allusion to his *Rambler* or his *Idler* is not readily apprehended in literary circles. The fame even of *Rasselas* has grown somewhat dim. But though the celebrity of the writings may have declined, the celebrity of the writer, strange to say, is as great as ever. Boswell's book has done for him more than the best of his own books could do. The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works. But the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive. The old philosopher is still among us in the brown coat with the metal buttons and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans. No human being who has been more than seventy years in the grave is so well-known to us. And it is but just to say that our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper, serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man.

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

Sir Humphry Davy was born at Penzance on the 17th of December, 1778. His was an ardent boyhood. Educated in a manner somewhat irregular, and with only the ordinary advantages of a remote country town, his talents appeared in the earnestness with which he cultivated at once the most various branches of knowledge and speculation. He was fond of metaphysics; he was fond of experiment; he was an ardent student of nature; and he possessed at an early age poetic powers, which, had they been cultivated, would in the opinion of competent judges, have made him as eminent in literature as he was in science. All these tastes endured throughout life. Business could not stifle them, — even the approach of death was unable to extinguish them. The reveries of his boyhood on the sea-worn cliffs of Mount's Bay, may yet be traced in many of the pages dictated during the last year of his life amidst the ruins of the Coliseum. But the physical sciences — those more emphatically called at that time chemical — speedily attracted and absorbed his most earnest attention. The philosophy of the imponderables — of Light, Heat, and Electricity — was the subject of his earliest, and also that of his happiest essays. He was a very able chemist in the strictest sense of the word, although his ardor and his rapidity of generalizing might seem to unfit him, in some

measure, for a pursuit which requires such intense watchfulness with regard to minutiæ, such patient weighing of fractions of a grain, such frequent though easy calculations. To Cavendish and Dalton, his great contemporaries — to whom we may now add Wollaston — these things were a pleasure in themselves; to Davy they must ever have been irksome indispensables to the discovery of truth. But, in fact, Davy's discoveries were almost independent of such quantitative details; numerical relations, and harmony of proportion, did not affect his mind with pleasure, which possibly was one reason of his deficient appreciation of works of art, the more remarkable from his poetic temperament. Dalton's doctrine of atomic combinations was slowly and doubtfully received by him, whilst Wollaston perceived its truth instantaneously. A keener relish for such relations might most naturally have led Davy to an anticipation of Mr. Faraday's notable discovery of the definite character of electrical decomposition, and the coincidence of the Electrochemical proportions for different bodies with their atomic weights.

The early papers of Davy refer chiefly to Heat, Light, and Electricity. He was, in fact, a physicist, more than a chemist. Whilst yet a surgeon's apprentice at Penzance, he satisfied himself of the immateriality of heat, which he illustrated by some ingenious experiments, in which, concurring unawares with the conclusions of his future patron Rumford, he laid one foundation of his promotion. Removed to a sphere of really scientific activity at Clifton, under Dr. Beddoes,[1] he executed those striking researches in pneumatic chemistry and the physiological effects of breathing various gases, which gave him his first reputation; re-

[1] Davy hit off his principal's character in a single sentence, — "Beddoes had talents which would have exalted him to the pinnacle of philosophical eminence, if they had been applied with discretion."

searches so arduous and full of risk as to require a chemist in the vigor of life, and urged by an unextinguishable thirst for discovery, to undertake them. Even his brilliant discovery of the effects of inhaling nitrous oxide brought no competitor into the field; and the use of anæsthetics, which might naturally have followed — the greatest discovery (if we except, perhaps, that of vaccination) for the relief of suffering humanity made in any age — was delayed for another generation. But so it was in all his triumphs. He never seemed to drain the cup of discovery. He quaffed only its freshest part. He felt the impulse of an unlimited command of resources. He carried on rapidly, and seemingly without order, several investigations at once. As in conversation he is described as seeming to know what one was going to say before uttering it, — he had the art of divining things complex and obscure. Seizing on results, he left to others the not inconsiderable merit, as well as labor, of pursuing the details. Keenly alive as he was to the value of fame, and the applause which his talents soon obtained for him, he left enough of both for his friends; his contemporaries, as well as his successors, were enabled to weave a chaplet from the laurels which he had not stooped to gather.

These remarks apply quite as strongly to his discoveries in the laws and facts of electro-chemical decomposition — those on which his fame most securely rests. Promoted in 1801 to a situation in the Laboratory of the Royal Institution in London, he attached himself to the study of galvanism in the interval of the other and more purely chemical pursuits which the duties of his situation required. He had already, at Clifton, made experiments with the pile of Volta, and taken part in the discussion of its theory and effects, then (as we have seen) so actively carried on in Britain. In his papers of that period we find not only excellent experiments, but happy and just reasoning. The

chemical theory of the pile — namely, that the electrical effects observed by Galvani and Volta are due solely or chiefly to the chemical action of the fluid element on the metals — was more strongly embraced by him then than afterwards. In November, 1800, he concluded that "the pile of Volta acts only when the conducting substance between the plates is capable of oxidating the zinc; and that in proportion as a greater quantity of oxygen enters into combination with the zinc in a given time, so in proportion is the power of the pile to decompose water and to give the shock greater." He concludes that "the chemical changes connected with" oxidation "are *somehow* the cause of the electrical effect it produces."[1] His views on this subject underwent some modification afterwards. In his *Elements of Chemical Philosophy*, published twelve years later, we find the following statement of his opinions on the subject: — "Electrical effects are exhibited by the same bodies acting as masses, which produce chemical phenomena when acting by their particles; it is, therefore, not improbable that the primary cause of both may be the same." A little further on he adds: — "They," speaking of electrical and chemical energies, "are conceived to be *distinct* phenomena, but produced by the *same power* acting in the one case on masses, in the other on particles."[2]

In 1804, Berzelius had published in conjunction with Hisinger, a paper on Electro-chemical Decompositions, in which he insisted on the general fact, that alkalies, earths,

[1] *Works*, ii., 162.

[2] *Works*, iv., 119. In his Bakerian lecture (1806) he had said, "In the present state of our knowledge, it would be useless to attempt to speculate on the remote cause of the electrical energy, or the reason why different bodies, after being brought into contact, should be found differently electrified; its relation to chemical affinity is, however, sufficiently evident. May it not be identical with it; and an essential property of matter?" — *Works*, vol. v., p. 39.

and combustible bodies seem to be attracted to the negative pole, and oxygen and acids to the positive. He also showed that the subdivision of bodies thus obtained was only a relative not an absolute one; for the same body may act as a base to a second, and as an acid to a third. But we must observe that results almost similar were contained in the early papers of Davy, and that Berzelius did not carry out his own principle so far as to lead to any striking discovery between 1803 (when his experiments were made) and 1806, (the date of Davy's first Bakerian lecture,) during which time the science of Galvanism or Voltaism made little real progress. The numerous experimenters engaged with it were baffled by the anomalous chemical results obtained, and by the appearance of decompositions under circumstances wholly unexpected, such as appeared to threaten the existence of some of the best established chemical truths. The chemical theory of the pile, at first so plausible, presented new difficulties, and Berzelius having for a while defended it, returned to the simple contact theory of Volta. It was then that Davy seriously addressed himself to the subject, resolved to trace to their source every chemical anomaly; and this he effected in a masterly manner, in his Bakerian lecture read before the Royal Society in 1806. In it he traces the unaccountable results of his predecessors to impurities in the materials used by them, or to those of the vessels in which the decompositions were made; and he brings into a far distincter light than his predecessors had done, the power of the galvanic circuit to suspend or reverse the action of even powerful chemical affinity; "different bodies naturally possessed of chemical affinities appearing incapable of combining or remaining in combination when placed in a state of electricity different from their natural order." We here see the fundamental doctrine of the electro-chemical theory, that all bodies possess a place in the great scale of natural electrical relations to one another;

that chemical relations are intimately connected with this electric state, and are suspended or reversed by its alteration.

In the interpretation of those striking experiments, in which he caused acids to pass to the positive pole of the battery through the midst of alkaline solutions, and the converse, we find so close an approach to the theory of polar decomposition as enforced by the discoveries and reasonings of Mr. Faraday, that it seems impossible to deny to Davy the merit of having first perceived these curious relations. "It is very natural," he says, "to suppose that the repellant and attractive energies are communicated *from one particle to another particle* of the same kind so as to establish a conducting chain in the fluid, and that the locomotion takes place in consequence;" and presently adds, "there may possibly be a succession of decompositions and recompositions throughout the fluid.[1] He likewise shows (p. 21) that the decomposing power does not reside in the wire or *pole*, but may be extended indefinitely through a fluid medium capable of conducting electricity. Mr. Faraday's experiments, which led him to discard the term *pole*, lead to the same conclusion, and are of the same character. A few pages further on in this same Bakerian lecture, Davy observes (p. 42), that, "allowing that combination depends on a balance of the natural electrical energies of bodies, it is easy to conceive that a *measure* may be found of the artificial energies as to intensity and quantity capable of destroying this equilibrium; and such a measure would enable us to make a scale of electrical powers corresponding to degrees of affinity." Here we see the acute presentiment of the beautiful discovery of the definiteness of electrical decompositions; as in the concluding portion of the same remarkable paper we find a clear anticipation of natural electrical currents to be discovered in mineral, and especially metalif-

[1] Of the Bakerian Lecture, in his collected Works, p. 29.

erous deposits, since established by Mr. R. W. Fox, and of the agency of feeble electric energies, long continued, in effecting geological changes, and in producing insoluble combinations of earths and metals, so ingeniously confirmed by the beautiful and direct experiments of Becquerel.

The sequel to this remarkable paper, read to the Royal Society in November, 1807, contained the splendid application of the principle and methods which it described, to the decomposition of the alkalies and to the discovery of their singular bases, — substances possessing the lustre and malleability of metals, yet so light as to float upon water, and having the extraordinary property of becoming inflamed in contact with ice. Potassium was discovered in the Laboratory of the Royal Institution on the 6th October, 1807, and sodium a few days later. The battery used contained 250 pairs of plates of six and four inches square. Such success was fitted to charm a disposition like that of Davy, and more than reward him for all his toils. To have discovered two new bodies, and opened an entirely new field of wide chemical research, would itself have been enough. But the extraordinary properties of the new bases were such as seemed to correspond to the lively imagination of the chemist who produced them, and to transport him to an Aladdin's palace more brilliant than ever his fertile imagination had ever conceived. Yet it is pleasing to remember that these popular discoveries followed, at the interval of a year, the patient and able researches which led him to them, and which had already been rewarded, at a period of the bitterest international hostilities by the scientific prize of 3,000 francs, founded by the Emperor Napoleon.[1]

The genius displayed in these, Davy's most celebrated

[1] Such was the national feeling at this time in England, that worthy people were found who considered Davy as almost a traitor, when he accepted the French prize. See Southey's *Life*.

researches, is evident on a careful perusal of his papers; but still more from a consideration of the state of science at the time, and of the willing tribute to his merits paid by the ablest of his contemporaries. Few persons of the present day will venture to controvert the assertion of his acute contemporary, Dr. Thomas Young (than whom no man was ever a less indiscriminate eulogist), that Davy's researches were "more splendidly successful than any which have ever before illustrated the physical sciences, in any of their departments;" and that the contents of the *Bakerian Lectures*, in particular, "are as much superior to those of Newton's *Optics*, as the *Principia* are superior to these or any other human work."[1] A not less impartial tribute to his superlative genius has been yielded by M. Dumas, who, if I mistake not, has described Davy as being the ablest and most successful chemist who ever lived. A similar homage is paid to him by the sagacious Cuvier.

It is not within our scope to consider minutely Davy's purely chemical discoveries and experiments, though they were numerous and important, independently of those made with the aid of electricity. His proofs of the elementary nature of chlorine and iodine were amongst the most considerable in their results. But as a mere analyst, Davy had neither the leisure nor the taste for continuous plodding labor, and he therefore naturally made mistakes in chemical details. His *Elements of Chemical Philosophy* remained, in consequence, a fragment of an extensive work. His contemporary, Berzelius, following his steps in electro-chemical discovery, attained far greater address, and became an author of high and merited reputation, whilst his school surpassed all others in Europe in producing accomplished analysts.[2]

[1] *Quarterly Review*, No. 15.

[2] Jons Jacob Berzelius, the greatest analytical chemist of his day, was born in East Gothland, in the same year with Davy, and died in

The years immediately following the publication of his *Bakerian Lectures* were passed by Davy in the unenvied possession of the highest fame, and in the tranquil furtherance of his first and greatest discoveries. His lectures at the Royal Institution continued to be one of the most fashionable resorts in London, and he was freely admitted in return into the most aristocratic society; he had but to express a wish, and a voltaic battery of no less than 2,000 pairs, containing 128,000 square inches of surface, was constructed for his use, by means of a liberal subscription. His health, when seriously compromised by the severity of his labors, was a matter of public concern, and its variations were announced by frequent bulletins. The copyright of his lectures on agriculture was sold for a price unexampled perhaps before or since for such a work. In 1812, he was knighted by the Prince Regent, and soon after he married a lady of fortune and accomplishments. His duties at the Royal Institution became thenceforth honorary. He had in a space of ten years attained the pinnacle of scientific reputation, and he was for the time truly happy — unenvious of others — deeply attached to his relatives — generous of his resources — unwearied in his philosophic labors. A certain change (it must with regret be owned) came over his state of mind, tarnished his serenity, and gradually, though imperceptibly, weakened his scientific zeal. It was to be ascribed solely, we believe, to the severe ordeal of exuberant but heartless popularity which he underwent in London. The flatteries of fashionable life acting on a young, ardent, and most susceptible mind, mingling first with the graver applause of his philosophic compeers, and at length, by their reiteration and seductions quite overpowering it, by degrees

1848, when he had almost completed his 69th year. He contributed, in a signal manner, to the establishment of Dalton's principle of definite chemical equivalents; but he made no single discovery of commanding importance.

attached Davy to the fashionable world, and loosened his ties to that laboratory which had once been to him the sole and fit scene of his triumphs. Had he been blessed with a family his course would have been evener and happier. Let us not severely criticize, where we still find so much to admire and imitate. But we record the fact, for the consolation of those who, beginning the pursuit of science, as Davy did, in a humble sphere, and with pure ardor, may fancy that they are worthy of pity, if they do not attain with him the honors of wealth and title, and the homage, grateful to talent, of rank, wit, and beauty.

A research, second perhaps only to his electro-chemical discoveries, remains to be noticed, as the chief fruit of the *third* period of his life, on which we now enter, the *first* being his early career before settling in London ; the *second* that passed in the Royal Institution.

The subject was, the laws of combustion, and the happy invention of the safety-lamp. Though intimately connected with the doctrine of simple heat, it may, most properly, from its chemical character, and from its connection with Davy's history, be considered briefly here. The lamentable loss of life occurring in coal-mines from explosions of fire-damp or inflammable air disengaged from the workings, had for many years attracted the attention and sympathy of the public, and had likewise been carefully considered by scientific men. The explosive gas was known to be the light carburetted hydrogen. Two plans alone seemed to present themselves for diminishing the danger : — the one to remove, or chemically to decompose the fire-damp altogether ; the other to provide a miner's lamp which, by its construction, should be incapable of causing explosion. The former of these modes of protection, it was soon seen, could only be palliative ; the only efficient form which it took, was that of a more effectual ventilation ; but the terrific rapidity with which a mine may be suddenly pervaded by fire-damp, from channels opened

by a single pick-axe, must prevent it from ever acting as a *cure*. The latter plan had as yet yielded nothing more effectual than the *steel mill* long used by miners, which produced an uncertain and intermitting light, by the rotation of a steel wheel against a flint, the scintillations of which were incapable of inflaming the fire-damp. The insufficiency of the light prevented it from being used, except in circumstances of known danger. The celebrated Baron Humboldt, Dr. Clanny, and several others, had invented safety-lamps on different principles; but they were all clumsy and more or less ineffectual.[1]

At last, in the summer of 1815, the Rev. Dr. Gray afterwards Bishop of Bristol, then chairman of a committee appointed by a benevolent association at Bishop Wearmouth for the prevention of colliery accidents, applied to Davy, who was then on a sporting tour in Scotland, requesting his advice and assistance. Sir Humphry answered the call with promptitude. On his southward journey, in the latter part of August, he visited the collieries, ascertained the circumstances of the danger which he had to meet, and was provided by Mr. Buddle with specimens of the inflammable air for examination. Within a fortnight after his return to London, he had ascertained new and important qualities of the substance, and had already four schemes on hand for the prevention of accident. Before the end of October he had arrived at the following principles of operation in connection with the safety-lamp. "First, a certain mixture of azote and carbonic acid prevents the explosion of the fire-damp, and this mixture is necessarily formed in the safe-lantern. Secondly, the fire-damp *will not explode* in tubes or feeders of a certain small diameter. The ingress

[1] I have spoken in art. 393 [of the Dissertation] of the independent and ingenious efforts of George Stephenson towards the invention of a safety-lamp contemporaneously with those of Davy.

to, and egress of air from my lantern," he adds, "is through such tubes or feeders; and, therefore, when any explosion is *artificially* made in the safe-lantern, it does not communicate to the external air." The effect of narrow tubes in intercepting the passage of flame, is due to the cooling effect of their metallic sides upon the combustible gases of which flame is composed;[1] and one of his first and most important observations was the fortunate peculiarity that fire-damp, even when mixed with the amount of air most favorable to combustion, (one part of gas to seven or eight of air,) requires an unusually high temperature to induce combustion. Olefiant gas, carbonic oxide, and sulphuretted hydrogen, are all inflamed by iron at a red heat, or ignited charcoal, but carburetted hydrogen does not take fire under a *perfect white heat.* The earliest safety-lamp consisted of a lantern with horn or glass sides, in which a current of air to supply the flame was admitted below by numerous tubes of small diameter, or by narrow interstices between concentric tubes of some length; or, finally, by rows of parallel partitions of metal, forming rectangular canals extremely narrow in proportion to their length. A similar system of escape apertures was applied at the top of the lantern.

With characteristic ingenuity, Davy did not stop here. He continued to reduce at once the apertures and length of his metallic guards, until it occurred to him that *wire gauze* might, with equal effect and far more convenience, act upon the temperature of flame, so as to reduce it below the point of ignition, and thus effectually stop its communication. The experiment was successful, and by the 9th of November, 1815, or within about ten weeks after his first experiments, an account of the safety-lamp defended by wire

[1] This fact had been ascertained some years previously, by Mr. Tennant and Dr. Wollaston, but it remained unpublished, and was not applied by them to the prevention of colliery explosions.

gauze was presented to the Royal Society. About two months later he produced a lamp entirely enveloped in metallic tissue.

There are none of Davy's researches which will stand a closer scrutiny than those which terminated thus successfully. No fortuitous observation led him to conceive a happy idea and apply it to practice. A great boon to humanity and the arts was required at his hands; and without a moment's delay, he proceeded to seek for it under the guidance of a strictly experimental and inductive philosophy. Without, perhaps, a single false turn, and scarcely a superfluous experiment, he proceeded straight to his goal, guided by the promptings of a happy genius aided by no common industry. The chemical, the mechanical, and the purely physical parts of the problem were all in turn dealt with, and with equal sagacity. It may safely be affirmed that he who was destitute of any one of these qualifications must have failed in obtaining the object so ardently desired, unless by the aid of some rare good fortune. We have it on Davy's own authority, that none of his discoveries gave him so much pleasure as this one. His whole character possessed in it much of a sympathizing and generous humanity; his ideas of the dignity of science were from the first, as his researches in Dr. Beddoes' laboratory showed, intimately connected with the aim of advancing the welfare, and of diminishing the misfortunes of mankind: the rapidity and singular success of his investigation in the case of the safety-lamp, kept his ardent soul all alive, and afforded him the triumph of a *Eureka* at its completion. To these sources of inward gratification was added the unstinted meed of praise bestowed on him by his contemporaries. Playfair, "the true and amiable philosopher," as Davy long before described him, thus proclaimed his victory in the *Edinburgh Review*: — After describing the course of a discovery "which is in no degree the effect of accident," he

adds, "this is exactly such a case as we should choose to place before Bacon, were he to revisit the earth, in order to give him, in a small compass, an idea of the advancement which philosophy has made since the time when he had pointed out to her the route which she ought to pursue. The result is as wonderful as it is important. An invisible and impalpable barrier made effectual against a force the most violent and irresistible in its operations; and a power that in its tremendous effects seemed to emulate the lightning and the earthquake, confined within a narrow space, and shut up in a net of the most slender texture, — are facts which must excite a degree of wonder and astonishment, from which neither ignorance nor wisdom can defend the beholder."

For this truly patriotic labor, the only *national* testimony which Davy received was the inadequate one of a baronetcy which was conferred on him by the Prince Regent in 1818; but his real triumph and great reward were in the enthusiastic appreciation of his entire success by those on whom he had disinterestedly conferred so great a benefit. A testimonial, in the form of a service of plate, of great value, was presented to him by the coal-owners of the north of England.

Davy's researches on flame were intimately connected with his electrical and chemical discoveries. He remodelled Lavoisier's theory of combustion, and put an end to the distinction between combustibles and supporters of combustion. Chemical combination, effected with great energy, and accompanied by a high temperature, is essential to combustion, and either element of the combination is equally entitled to the denomination of combustible. Guided by the electro-chemical theory, Davy appears to have thought that the heat of flame has an electrical origin.

But I must hasten to close this section. Among the labors of his latter years, there was none which interested

Davy more, or which reasonably promised more useful results, than his plan for protecting the copper sheathing of ships from the corrosive action of sea-water, by affixing plates of zinc or iron, which should render the copper slightly electro-negative, and thus indispose it for combining with acid principles. It is a somewhat singular fact, that Fabbroni, about thirty years before, had instanced the corrosion of copper sheathing near the contact of heterogeneous metals, as an instance of the chemical origin of galvanism.[1] Davy's experiments were conducted with his usual skill and success, and the remedy only failed of general adoption on account, it may be said, of being *too* effectual, other and opposite injurious effects having been found to arise.

Davy was elected President of the Royal Society in 1820, in the room of Sir Joseph Banks, who had held the office for forty-two years. It was a distinguished compliment, for the election was all but unanimous. He continued to communicate papers for several years subsequently; but his energy, his temper, and, finally, his health began to give way, showing that the ardent labors of his youth and prime had injured his constitution. Attacked with paralysis in 1827, he spent his last years chiefly abroad, and died at Geneva (where he was buried), on the 29th May, 1829.

The character of Davy was a rare and admirable combination. The ardor of his researches, and the deep devotion of his whole being to scientific investigation, have been already proved. They had the effect of completely annihilating every baser passion. He valued property only in so far as he could apply it usefully; and his disinterestedness with respect to the fortunes which several of his practical discoveries might have honorably earned, was one of the

[1] There appears, however, to have been something erroneous in the details of Fabbroni's observations, or at least in the account of them given in *Nicholson's Journal*.

most striking parts of his character. His fancy was discursive to a degree rarely met with in men of science. He continued to write poetry nearly all his life, and the tone of it was that of grave speculation, always reverting to the destiny of man and the beneficence of the Creator. His lectures were composed with care; and their effect, even as pieces of oratory, was striking. Coleridge frequented them "to increase his stock of metaphors;" yet they were always to the point, and never degenerated into rhetorical display. For a man of such extraordinary liveliness of fancy and impetuosity of action, his mistakes were astonishingly few. After his very first experience, his publications were made with great care and judgment. His estimates of his contemporaries appear generally to have been fair and liberal, though it would be incorrect to affirm that he was universally popular among them. The combination of isolated and intense occupation in his laboratory, with excitement in the mixed society of an admiring London public, was a trial which few, if any, could have escaped better than he did; and so far as we can judge of a man from his expressed opinion of his own successes, whether recorded in his works or in his intimate correspondence, Davy must be accounted to have acquitted himself gracefully and well. He always spoke of the Pile of Volta as the first source of his own success. "Nothing tends so much to the advancement of knowledge as the application of a new instrument," he says; and then adds, "The native intellectual powers of men in different times are not so much the causes of the different success of their labors, as the peculiar nature of the means and artificial resources in their possession;" a proposition which he applies to his own discoveries. But we may truly say with one of his biographers, that to him "the Voltaic apparatus was the *golden branch* by which he subdued the spirits that had opposed the advance of previous philosophers; but what would its possession have

availed him had not his genius, like the ancient sibyls, pointed out its use and application?"

The last, and not least, extraordinary characteristic of Davy to which I shall now advert, was the highly practical turn of a mind which seemed formed in a speculative mould. Four at least of his chief researches were of this kind — his experiments in breathing the gases; his lectures on agricultural chemistry; his invention of the safety-lamp; and his protectors for ships. No man, whose path so clearly lay in original discovery, ever left so many valuable legacies to art and to his country.

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, one of the most celebrated historians and philosophers of Great Britain, has already been twice noticed in the *Preliminary Dissertations*,[1] where the principal doctrines of his metaphysics have been considered by Stewart, and those of his ethics by Mackintosh. This, happily, exempts the writer of the present article from touching on the same topics, except incidentally. But as the life and character of other celebrated men, no less prominent in the *Dissertations*, have been formally treated in the body of this work, it seemed due to the memory of Hume to give his biography a little more fully than in the few paragraphs dedicated to him in the previous editions; and the following sketch has therefore been inserted. It will be restricted to a brief account of his life and genius, an estimate of his merits as a writer, and probably a glance at one or two of such of his philosophical opinions as were too remote from the design of either Dissertation to challenge notice there, but yet may seem of sufficient importance to be referred to.

Hume has left us a very short autobiographic sketch of his own life; it is too scanty, too bare of details, to inspire the interest which belongs to some similar memoirs, — that of Gibbon for example. But though it is little more than a catalogue of dates and facts, the author offers a good apology

[1] To the Encyclopædia Britannica.

for his conciseness: "It is difficult," he says, "for a man to speak long of himself without vanity." He assures the reader that the notice shall contain little more than the history of his writings, and he has kept his word. From all danger of vanity in treating such topics — however delicate for an author — he flattered himself he had security in his early *failures:* "The first success of my writings," says he, "was not such as to be an object of vanity." Yet the acerbity with which at that so distant day he remembers and records the slow steps by which he had emerged from obscurity into fame, and which all that fame had not been able to soothe, would seem to indicate that the philosopher had not quite so effectually mortified his vanity as he imagined. The tardy homage which the public paid to his merits is a theme to which he never tired of recurring, though, as will be seen in the sequel, not very reasonably.[1]

He was born at Edinburgh, April 26, 1711. His father was a scion of the house of the Earl of Home, or Hume, as the name was often spelt, and as our philosopher, in opposition to his brother's orthographic heterodoxy, always persisted in spelling it. His mother was daughter of Sir David Falconer, president of the College of Justice. His father died when he was a child; his mother, of whom he speaks in the fondest terms, was long spared to him, and well deserved the tribute of affection he pays her. "Though young and handsome, she devoted herself entirely to the rearing and education of her children." At the age of fifteen he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, and he tells us, what none will doubt, that he passed through the

[1] "Every new edition was only an acknowledgment of the injustice which had been done him, and a poor instalment of his just dues. . . . Hume at last wore out the patience of his very publisher," (*Ed. Rev.* Jan. 1847). "As to the approbation or esteem of those blockheads who call themselves the public," thus he writes (1767) "and whom a bookseller, a lord, a priest, or a party can guide, I do most heartily despise it."

usual "course of education with success;" though his reading was marked at that time — and as regards the classics, was always marked — rather by extent than by accurate scholarship. Even at that early age he was possessed with an intense love of literature, and by that ambition of literary distinction which was the ruling passion, not to say the only passion, of his life. Seldom, if ever, has the propensity to a studious life developed itself so early or so exclusively, or asserted its claims so imperiously. From the very first, and all along, it overmastered every thing in the shape of pleasure or interest that could be brought into competition with it. As a younger brother, and a younger brother of no opulent house, he was, of course, to carve out his own fortunes in the world. "My patrimony," he says, "after the manner of my country, was but slender;" yet no lures, no exigencies could induce him to seek fortune at the expense of literature. In this case, the phlegm of the young philosopher seemed, in its way, as immovable as the enthusiasm of a young poet frequently proves; he could not, as the world would say, *calculate* consequences. To add to the wonder, Hume was most creditably anxious of independence, and resolved, at whatever costs of economy, to possess it. Nay, as his after-life showed, our philosopher was by no means insensible to the advantages of wealth; nevertheless, he was unwilling to adopt any course to attain riches at the expense of those literary pursuits which must more frequently conduct to penury. Thus all the schemes his friends formed on his behalf were frustrated by this one passion. His "studious habits, sobriety, and industry, led them to wish that he should devote himself to the law," in which surely these qualities, in conjunction with his surpassing acuteness and subtilty, might have easily won distinction; but while "they fancied he was poring over Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors he was se-

cretly devouring." An experiment in mercantile life was equally unsuccessful. In 1734, he went to Bristol with introductions to "eminent merchants" in that city, but he found this "scene utterly unsuitable." He then exiled himself to France; and first at Rheims, then at La Flêche, devoted himself in studious solitude, to literature and philosophy. During this time he made a "rigid frugality supply the deficiencies of fortune" — a course to which he resolutely adhered till the dawn of better days; and with singular decision of character, and obedience to the ruling passion, "regarded every object as contemptible except the improvement of his talents for literature." In this interval he meditated and composed his *Treatise of Human Nature.* This work was completed by his twenty-fifth year, and, as the production of so young a mind, must certainly be regarded as a prodigy of metaphysical acuteness. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the *results* of his speculation (if scepticism allow the term) must have been arrived at long before, even from his boyish days. In the account he gives of himself in that remarkable letter, first published by Mr. Burton, (vol. i., pp. 31–39,) in which he anonymously consults a physician in relation to some singular but very prolonged hypochondriacal affection, (itself, probably, both symptom and effect of an overwrought mind,) he discloses a style of thought and points to a method of speculation which strongly remind us of the conditions of mind under which Descartes commenced philosopher. Were there any proofs (as there are certainly none) of his acquaintance with Descartes' writings at this early age, it would have seemed almost certain that his method of philosophizing was sheer imitation; on the other hand, if this letter had been written *after* his residence at La Flêche, where Descartes felt so similarly, the same conclusion would have been inevitable. From this letter, as a clue to much in the character of his

mind and its after history, and of its tendencies to morbid speculation at a very early date, we shall presently give some extracts.

In 1737, Hume came to London with his *Treatise on Human Nature*, and in the next year published it. "Never literary attempt," he says, "was more unfortunate; it fell dead-born from the press, without reaching such distinction as even to exite a murmur." He declares, however, that being naturally of a cheerful temper, he soon recovered from this and similar subsequent disappointments. Yet it is clear, from the details in Burton's *Life*, that the equanimity of our philosopher was sorely tried; that he had, with the exaggeration natural in a young author, been expecting that the world would have little to do for a time, except to read his lucubrations! He tells his friend Ramsay, that "he would not aim at any thing until he could judge of his *success in his grand undertaking*, and see upon what footing he was to stand in the world;" and as the day of publication drew near, confesses to being perturbed at "the nearness of the great event." Yet it is certain that he bore the disappointment of his hopes on this occasion much better than he did some far lighter failures of the same kind. Cheerful as might be his temper, buoyant as were his hopes, his mortifications of this sort, and especially that which befell him when he published the first volume of his *History*, were keenly felt and remembered, and engendered prejudices against the "Public," which little became a philosopher, and utterly prevented him from doing the said "Public" justice. Properly speaking he never forgave its early neglect, and could not see that he had not been a very ill-used man, even when fame and competency had rewarded his at first unpromising labors. In the case of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, however, he himself admits, that in fact the public was in the right; which, indeed, any one would naturally expect, seeing that the philosopher was but five-and-twenty,

and his philosophy the product of that mature age! That he was not insensible that his failure in the first instance was more attributable to himself than to the world, is significantly shown by his acknowledgment of indiscretion in going to the press so early. "I had always," he says, "entertained a notion that my want of success in publishing the *Treatise of Human Nature*, had proceeded more from the manner than the matter" (equally from both, the public would say,) "and that I had been guilty of a very usual indiscretion in going to the press too early." He tells us, he "set about remedying its defects." He cast the first part of it entirely anew in the *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, published 1747; but this, he confesses, had little more success than the former. In fact, he was still but serving his apprenticeship to fame — which many a man, as great, has had to do for a much longer period. In 1742, he published the first part of his *Essays*. These, which were buoyed up by a large intermixture of more attractive topics than those of the *Treatise*, and were recommended by the fascinations of a far more finished style, met with a better reception, and they have since been always popular. The second edition, however, did not go off rapidly enough to satisfy the exacting temper of the author. After publishing the *Treatise*, he lived for some time with his brother in Scotland, still ardently pursuing his literary occupations. This mode of life was not very agreeably diversified by the temporary charge of the half mad, or at least wholly hypochondriacal Earl of Annandale (1745). Whether tutor or keeper be the more proper term for our philosopher during a year of very humiliating servitude, it seems hard to say. His next post (1747) was that of secretary to General St. Clair, whom he accompanied in his military embassy to the courts of Vienna and Turin. He was introduced, he tells us, as aid-de-camp to the general, and wore the uniform of an officer, — a droll transformation for our

ungainly philosopher. Two years were thus spent, almost the only years of his life, he declares, in which he was "estranged from literature." Total estrangement can hardly be supposed, nor does one see any reason for it. If it were so, the military uniform in his case must have done more than even the active duties of a soldier's life could do in that of Gibbon, in whom the passion for literature was, however, still more ardent than in Hume. Gibbon's account, in his *Journal*, of the absolute possession which history had taken of him, of the enthusiasm with which he indulged dreams of literary ambition and pursued his studies even in his tent, affords a striking instance of the "ruling passion." But if Hume's occupations estranged him for a while from literature, the emoluments of his office were not to be despised; they so materially aided his very limited resources, that he sometimes pleasantly talked to his smiling friends of having achieved independent fortune: "I was now," says he, "master of near a thousand pounds!"

In 1749, he again repaired to his brother's house, where he took up his abode for two years. He spent his leisure in composing the second part of his essays, which he called *Political Discourses*, and his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. His publisher now told him, that his writings, "all but the unfortunate *Treatise*, were beginning to be asked for and talked about." "It was a hopeful symptom too," he tells us, "that answers by reverends and right reverends came out two or three in a year;" and that he "found, by Dr. Warburton's railing, that the books were beginning to be esteemed in good company."

In 1751, he removed from the country to Edinburgh, under the notion that the "capital was the true scene for a man of letters;" and in the following year he published the *Political Discourses;* "the only work of mine," says he, "that was successful on the first publication." It is difficult to say what is the criterion of success in the estimate of un-

reasonable expectation; but Hume was still a *young* writer, and he certainly had no reason to complain of the reception of the first part of his *Essays*. Conscious of power, he was too impatient for fame, and forgot that fame is a thing of slow growth; he wished to see the oak rise immediately from the acorn. Meantime, grumble as he might, his saplings, in the estimate of any sober judge, would be thought to be doing well enough.

In the same year he published in London, his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, of which he hesitates not to say, that "of all his writings, philosophical, literary, or historical, it is incomparably the best."

Hume wondered that Rousseau should prefer his *Emile* to his *Heloise*, and compares it to Milton's preference of his *Paradise Regained* to his *Paradise Lost*. Whether Hume himself be not another instance of a singular delusion, many readers will have their doubts. But much will depend on what is meant by "best." If Hume meant by "best," that the *Enquiry* was the most original and acute of his writings, that which displayed most *power*, posterity will hardly affirm his verdict; if by "best," he meant, that of all his writings, it is most free from paradox and error, it will probably be granted. Sir James Mackintosh has observed, that "it is creditable to him that he deliberately preferred the treatise which is least tainted with paradox, though the least original of all his writings." Sir James contends, however, for its preëminent excellence of style. For a very able criticism of its merits and defects, the reader is referred to the second Dissertation.

In 1752, Hume was appointed librarian to the Faculty of Advocates. The chief immediate value of the office, to which little or no emolument was attached, consisted in the access it afforded to a large library; indirectly it was of greater advantage, as this last circumstance encouraged, if it did not suggest, his writing the *History of England*. Ter-

rified, however, with the magnitude of the task, dreading, as he well might, to begin, after the orthodox manner, with the landing of Julius Cæsar, he commenced with the accession of the Stuarts, "an epoch," he thought, "when the misrepresentations began chiefly to take place;" but which, let them be what they would, could hardly transcend his own. His anticipations of success were, as in former cases, sanguine, and he was doomed, for a while, to see the usual frustration of his hopes. "Miserable," says he, "was my disappointment; I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disappointment, and even execration. English, Scotch, and Irish; Whig and Tory, churchman and sectary, free-thinker and religionist, united in their rage against the one man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. and the Earl of Strafford." Hume's indignation makes a droll mis-estimate of his own enormous delinquencies. If he had exercised common justice and impartiality, to say nothing of "generosity," in other cases, the few "generous tears" which the unwontedly sentimental skeptic could have managed to distil for Strafford or Charles, would never have given such mortal offence. It was yet more mortifying to the author, that the furious storm which greeted the first appearance of the work, subsided into a more vexatious calm; for what man would not sooner be railed at than forgotten? The *History* seemed doomed to oblivion. The publisher assured Hume, that "in a year he sold but forty-five copies." Hume himself confesses, that with two "odd exceptions," — the *Primates of England and Ireland*, — he scarcely heard of any man of rank or letters who "could endure the book;" and that had it not been for the breaking out of the war with France (in spite of the "cheerful temper" with which he would have us believe his philosophy took such things[1]), he would have sought an asylum there,

[1] On a subsequent occasion, when complaining of the tardiness of his political patrons, Hume repeated this sort of *threat*. — "The fum-

and changing his name, for ever renounced his country! As it was, his country was spared this dire infliction. Meantime, Hume persevered, and his second volume which appeared two years afterwards had somewhat better success.

In 1759, he published, according to the retrograde course in which he had commenced, the history of the House of Tudor, which also was received with a storm of disapprobation. But if we may trust his own averment, he was now "callous against the impression of public folly;" and gave the early history in two more volumes in 1761, "with tolerable, and but tolerable success."

But that his complaints of want of success were, on the whole, unreasonable, is evident from his own statement, namely, that in spite of all "public folly," "the copy-money given him by the booksellers much exceeded any thing formerly known in England." In fact he had been, as usual, too impatient of success. But even when he had become, and in a large degree from his literary labors, "not only independent, but opulent" according to his truly philosophical scale of riches, — he never forgave the "public folly" for not instantaneously recognizing his merits.

Though his *History* had grievous defects, which he took care, in the indulgence of his prejudices (continually strengthening with opposition), to aggravate in every successive edition, it had also singular merits, and was secure of the popularity which the impatience of its author thought so tardy. It was nearly the first modern example of history treated in a philosophical spirit, while the charms of its unrivalled style would alone have insured its success.

ing incense," says the critic in the *Ed. Review*, (1847,) "which the Parisians were offering him as a sort of male Goddess of Reason, must have intoxicated him, or he never would have closed a letter with the formal notice, — 'I have been accustomed to meet with nothing but insults and indignities from my native country; but if it continue so, '*ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habebis.*'"

In the interval between the first and second volumes of his *History* he published his *Natural History of Religion;* of which he says the "public entry was obscure;" its contents, acute as the treatise is, need not leave us in any wonder at that. For this neglect, however, he assures us he received *consolation*, in the shape of "a pamphlet by Dr. Hurd, written with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school." The *consolation*, from this mode of speaking of it, would not seem very soothing.

Hume was now (1761) fifty years of age, and meditated a philosphical retreat in Edinburgh for the rest of his days; but on receiving an invitation from Lord Hertford to attend him in his embassy to Paris, with the prospect of secretaryship to the embassy, he, after some hesitation, consented. He was soon appointed secretary, and in 1765, when Lord Hertford was made lord-lieutenant of Ireland, was left at Paris as *Charge d'Affairs* till the new ambassador, the Duke of Richmond, arrived. In 1766, he returned to Edinburgh, "*not richer*," he pleasantly says, "*but with much more money.*"

During his residence in Paris, he was not only welcome, he was the *rage*. In spite of his philosophical shyness, his destitution of all personal graces and charm of manner, and even in spite of his French — French which only French politeness could have heard without laughing — he was overwhelmed with the most flattering attentions of combined rank and genius, youth and beauty. "The more I resiled from these excessive civilities," says he, "the more I was loaded with them." It is evident, nevertheless, from many expressions, that this homage was not a little soothing to our philosopher's complacency, and often excited a flutter of vanity which his philosophy would hardly have approved; and he would as certainly have been cured of it, had he been duly conscious of the ridiculous position in which his

worshippers often placed him. "From what has already been said of him," says Lord Charlemont, "it is apparent that his conversation to strangers, and particularly to Frenchmen, could be little delightful, and still more particularly, one would suppose, to French women; and yet no lady's toilette was complete without Hume's attendance. At the opera his broad unmeaning face was usually seen *entre deux jolis minois*. The ladies in France gave the *ton*, and the *ton* was deism; a species of philosophy ill suited to the softer sex, in whose delicate frame weakness is interesting, and timidity a charm. . . . How my friend Hume was able to endure the encounter of these French female Titans, I know not."[1] Some of the scenes in which fashionable society doomed him to enact a part, must have been exquisitely comic; and had his friends intended to ridicule, not to honor him, they could hardly have devised any thing better adapted to the purpose. The scene described so vividly by Madame D'Epinay, must surely have been abundantly trying. We have hardly space for the passage, but it is so graphic, and indeed so instructive, that we cannot resist the temptation to give an abridged translation below.[2] On

[1] *Memoires of Charlemont*, cited in Burton's *Life*, vol. ii. p. 223. To which we may add the following from Grimm's *Correspondence Litteraire:* — "Ce quil y a encore de plaisant, c'est que toutes les jolies femmes se le sont arraché, et que le gros philosophe Ecossais s'est puls dans leur société. C'ést un excellent homme, que David Hume; il est naturellement serein, il entend finement, il dit quelque-fois avec sel, quoiqu'il parle peu; mais il est lourd, il n'a ni chaleur, ni grace, ni agrément dans l'esprit, ni rien qui soit propre à s'allier au ramage de ces charmantes petites machines qu'on appelle jolies femmes. O que nous sommes un drôle de peuple!" — *Ibid.*

[2] "The celebrated David Hume, the great fat English historian, known and esteemed for his writings, has not equal talents for the social amusements for which all our pretty women had decided him to be fit. He made his debût at the house of Madame de T———. They had destined him to act the part of a sultan seated between two slaves, employing all his eloquence to make them fall in love with

another occasion still more trying to his gravity, if not to his modesty, he was compelled to listen to complimentary harangues from the Dauphin's children, — the youngest of the child-orators unhappily breaking down in the middle of his address; we shall give the scene in Hume's own vein of quiet pleasantry. It is clear that however flattered by the homage received, as other expressions in his letters prove, he was by no means insensible to the absurdity of the situation in which the extravagance of adulation sometimes placed him. "Do you ask me," says he, "about my course of life? I can only say that I eat nothing but ambrosia, drink nothing but nectar, breathe nothing but incense, and tread on nothing but flowers. Every man I meet, and still more, every lady, would think they were wanting in the most indispensable duty, if they did not make a long and

him; finding them inexorable, he was to seek the cause of their obstinacy; he is placed on the sofa between the two prettiest women in Paris, he looks at them attentively, keeps striking his hands on his stomach and knees, and finds nothing else to say to them than, — 'Eh bien! me demoiselles. . . . Eh bien! vous voilà donc! . . . Eh bien! vous voila . . . vous voilà ici?' This lasted for a quarter of an hour without his being able to get any further. One of them at last rose impatiently. . . . Since then he has been doomed to the part of a spectator, and is not less welcomed and flattered. In truth, the part he plays here is most amusing. Unfortunately for him, or rather for philosophic dignity (for he seems to accommodate himself very well to this mode of life), there was no ruling mania in this country when he came here; under these circumstances he was looked upon as a new found treasure, and the enthusiasm of our young heads turned towards him. All the pretty women are mad about him; he is at all the fine suppers, and there is no good fête without him; in a word, he is among our fashionables what the Genevese are to me." (*Memoirs and Correspondence de Madame D'Epinay*, vol. iii. p. 284.) Well might a writer in the *Edinburgh Review* say, "Since the exhibition of the old *Fabliaux* of Aristotle in love down upon all-fours, and his mistress riding on his back — there has been no representation of philosophy so out of character, as it is shown us in the portrait of Hume by Madame d'Epinay." (*Ed. Review*, January, 1847.)

elaborate harangue in my praise. What happened last week, when I had the honor of being presented to the D——n's children, at Versailles, is one of the most curious scenes I had yet passed through. The Duc de B., the eldest, a boy of ten years old, stepped forth and told me how many friends and admirers I had in this country, and that he reckoned himself in the number, from the pleasure he had received from the reading of many passages in my works. When he had finished, his brother, the Count de P., who is two years younger, began his discourse, and informed me that I had been long and impatiently expected in France, and that he himself expected soon to have great satisfaction from the reading of my fine *History*. But what is more curious, when I was carried thence to the Count D'A., who is but four years of age, I heard him mumble something which, though he had forgot in the way, I conjectured from some scattered words, to have been also a panegyric dictated to him. Nothing could more surprise my friends, the Parisian philosophers, than this incident." [1]

The French of Hume could scarcely have been so bad as the malicious wit of Horace Walpole has represented it; if it was, it is hard to believe that, however prone may have been the French just at that moment to admire, he should have been able to get on in the saloons of Paris at all. Even French civility could hardly have kept its countenance. That it did not refrain from sarcasm we have some proofs, while Hume's English acquaintance exercised it abundantly. "The French," says Walpole with his customary cynicism, "believe in Mr. Hume; the only thing in the world that they believe implicitly; for I defy them to understand any language which he speaks." And in a letter first published in the *Suffolk Correspondence*, he says, with still more reckless causticity, "as every thing English is in

[1] Burton, vol. ii. p. 177, 178.

fashion, our bad French is accepted into the bargain. Many of us are received everywhere. Mr. Hume is fashion itself, although his French is almost as unintelligible as his English." It is not Walpole only, however, that makes himself merry with the philosopher's French. One of Rousseau's suspicions of Hume was founded on a few words of French which he uttered in his sleep. Hume remarked that he was not aware that he dreamt in French; "he could not," quietly said M. Morellet.

Of his quarrel with Rousseau, which made so much noise at the time of its occurrence both in England and France, Hume, in the little sketch of his life, which comes up to within a short period of his death, says not one syllable. It certainly was not from thinking it of no importance, for it gave him a world of vexation; indeed he confesses it was one of the most painful, as well as the most extraordinary that had ever happened to him. It was perhaps partly from unpleasant remembrances, that he passed it by; but also probably from a more creditable motive. Angry, and justly angry as he had felt at Rousseau's ingratitude and absurdity — unphilosophically virulent as his language[1] had sometimes been, he doubtless felt inclined as time rolled on, to acquiesce in the views since generally taken, namely, that the French philosopher's "egotism" and "sentimentality" were not seldom undistinguishable from madness; and whether they had produced it or resulted from it might be a fair question. Of the whole quarrel, a most copious and interesting account will be found in Burton's *Life of Hume;* and it is no more than just to say that Hume comes out of it in a manner highly creditable not only to his honor but to his benevolence. His friends in France had forewarned him what a

[1] In the celebrated introduction to the letter to Baron d'Holbach, in which Hume first explodes in wrath, he says, "Mon cher Baron, Jean Jacques est un scélérat."

monster of intractable caprice and infinite egotism he was patronizing; — all which he found out when it was too late. Surely the scene which he himself paints with so much vividness, in which Rousseau, after fantastically misinterpreting an act of kindness into the most villanous malignity, suddenly relents, pops down into the surprised philosopher's lap, and sobs and blubbers out his momentary repentance amidst tears and kisses, — repentance soon to be followed by a relapse into as capricious resentment, — presents a picture of Rousseau, of which it is hard to say whether it be more pitiable or ludicrous; while we may easily conceive that to one of so "unsentimental" a nature as Hume, his involuntary *rôle* in so ridiculously "tender scene" must have been profoundly mortifying.

"I endeavored," says Hume, "to pacify you and to divert the discourse, but to no purpose. You sat sullen, and was either silent, or made me very peevish answers. At last you rose up and took a turn or two about the room, when all of a sudden, and to my great surprise, you clapped yourself on my knee, threw your arms about my neck, kissed me with seeming ardor, and bedewed my face with tears. . . . . I was very much affected, I own; and I believe a very tender scene passed between us." The description of Rousseau is, as may be expected, still richer.[1]

After about two more years (1767–1769), of political service as under secretary, a post to which he was preferred by General Conway, Hume finally retired to Edinburgh, and there anticipated a calm philosophic evening of life in the midst of his favorite society. To use his own words he was "very opulent," having a revenue of £1000 a year. His society was much courted by men of the highest literary reputation, and of the widest diversity of opinions, both political and religious. Freed from literary and all other

[1] Burton, vol. ii. p. 342.

cares, he entertained, "though somewhat stricken in years, the prospect of enjoying long his ease, and seeing the increase of his reputation."

These hopes were fallacious. In 1775, appeared the first symptoms of that long decay which terminated in his death, August, 1776.

It is but justice to say that all concurrent testimony proves him to have borne this slow and harassing, though, it seems, by no means painful illness, not only with exemplary fortitude and patience, but with much sweetness of temper, and to have contemplated the great change with undiminished serenity. Convinced that his disease was incurable long before his friends would believe it, he refused to listen to false predictions of returning health. When Dr. Dundas intimated that he should tell his friend, Colonel Elphinstone, that he "was much better, and in a fair way of recovery," Hume replied, "Doctor, as I believe you would not choose to tell any thing but the truth, you had better tell him that I am dying as fast as my worst enemies, if I have any, could wish, and as easily as my best friends could desire."

Sometimes, it is true, he regarded the approach of the last moment with a hilarity strangely unbecoming his situation, whether as a philosopher or a man; and his ill-timed pleasantry about Charon's boat might well have been spared. John Foster, in his review of Ritchie's *Life* of the philosopher, has observed, that even on the hypothesis that death is an extinction of our being, much more on that of Hume's skepticism, which left it *uncertain* whether death might not reveal the truth of what he had been doubting all his life long, any thing bordering on levity in such an hour is utterly out of place. It is as though a man should laugh and caper in the cave of Trophonius. But, in other respects, it cannot be denied that Hume's last hours exhibit a serenity which, though often exemplified by religion, has rarely been

exhibited by philosophy, and still more rarely by a skeptical philosophy.

Foolish inferences have been founded on what cannot without gross disingenousness be denied, — the philosophic fortitude and tranquillity of Hume's death, — and equally foolish attempts made to prove all that fortitude and tranquillity affectation. Experience ought to convince us that nothing can be inferred from the adaptation of this or that system of philosophy or religion to produce calmness in a dying hour, from the phenomena of *any individual death-bed.* The best men have often encountered the great enemy with dismay, and the worst with tranquillity. We can as little infer from their conduct what death is to disclose, as we could infer what is at the bottom of a deep abyss, if we saw that, of a thousand men who were compelled to leap into it, some madly laughed, and some pusillanimously wept on the brink before making the inevitable plunge. It should be sufficient to vindicate the superiority at least of a Christian's faith to every form of skepticism, that if he has really lived in accordance with his hopes and convictions, the *natural* tendency of his sentiments and conduct is to produce tranquillity at the last hour, whether from physical causes he attains that tranquillity or not; and that his "immortal hopes" — even if they were to prove delusions — are as naturally connected with a peaceful close of the great strife as any other *cause* with its *effect.* Nothing can be more true than the pointed declaration of Lord Byron: "Indisputably the firm believers in the Gospel have a great advantage over all others, for this simple reason, that, if true, they will have their reward hereafter; and, if there be no hereafter, they can be but with the infidel in his eternal sleep, having had the assistance of an exalted hope through life, without subsequent disappointment, since (at the worst for them) 'out of nothing nothing can arise, not even sorrow.'"

On the other hand, even the least candid of skeptics will acknowledge that there is nothing in skepticism itself — least of all in such radical, devastating skepticism as that of Hume — *naturally* calculated to soothe a dying hour. Though a skeptic may meet it with tranquillity, from frigidity of temperament or hardihood of character, or fixed aversion to look at the future, or from a too complacent estimate of his own worth,[1] or a deficient moral sensibility, or from many other reasons, assuredly there is nothing in the native tendency of a skeptic's sentiments to render a death-bed more tolerable.

And that such is the natural impotence of skeptical philosophy for all such purposes, would seem to be indicated by the frequent appeal of skeptics to this "instantia solitaria" of Hume's death-bed. The rarity of the phenomenon neutralizes it as an argument; if, like the calm or triumphant deaths of consistently religious men, such a phenomenon were too common to be specially noted at all, it would be something to the purpose.

For Hume's skepticism, charity, we think, may blamelessly make ampler excuse than the generality of readers have been disposed to make. One may suspect, considering its remarkably early, uniform, and inveterate character, that it had to do profoundly with the very structure of his intel-

[1] Hume certainly pronounces his own éloge with sufficient confidence: "My friends," says he in his autobiography, "never had occasion to vindicate *any one circumstance* of my character and conduct." If by this he meant to claim exemption only from flagrant vice, there are few decent characters in life who could not say as much; but, with a deeper self-knowledge and profounder moral sensibility, most men would own that they were conscious of too many failings which men knew not, and which God only knew, to permit them to plume themselves on any such grounds. But of the ordinary infirmities of man, and especially of the subtle spiritual vices of pride, vainglory, presumption, and prejudice, the biography and character of Hume present as little lack as those of other men.

lect, and was *ab origine* far more involuntary than is generally the case. It may, in our opinion, be even surmised that it was connected with that singular morbid condition from which he suffered so much at so early an age. The very curious document in which he discloses so freely the symptoms which oppressed him has been already referred to, and the brief citations we proposed to give will be found below; but the whole letter, first published in Burton's *Life* is well worthy of perusal *in extenso*. It reveals a condition of mind, considering the writer's extreme youth, at least as unhealthy as that of the body. At an age when other youths are for the most part only too credulous, he was entertaining universal doubt; and when others are full of nothing but poetry and love, he was presumptuously exploring the deepest problems that can engage the human intellect, and declaring that nothing certain was yet established in philosophy or morals! At the very time that he was laboring under the cloud of hypochondriacal depression, referred to in the letter from which we give extracts below, he was intensely excogitating his philosophy. His whole state was unnatural.[1]

[1] "Every one who is acquainted either with the philosophers or critics knows that there is nothing yet established in either of these two sciences, and that they contain little more than endless disputes, even in the most fundamental articles. Upon examination of these, I found a certain boldness of temper growing in me, which was not inclined to submit to any authority in these subjects, but led me to seek out some new medium by which truth might be established. After much study and reflection on this, at last, when I was about eighteen years of age, there seemed to be opened up to me a new scene of thought, which transported me beyond measure, and made me, with an ardor natural to young men, throw up every other pleasure or business to apply entirely to it. . . . . I was infinitely happy in this course of life for some months; till at last, about the beginning of September, 1729, all my ardor seemed in a moment to be extinguished, and I could no longer raise my mind to that pitch which formerly gave me such excessive pleasure. . . . . In this condition I remained for nine months very uneasy to myself, as you may

At the early age of twenty-two or twenty-three, his philosophical opinions were already nearly complete — that is,

well imagine, but without growing any worse, which was a miracle. . . . . Though I was sorry to find myself engaged with so tedious a distemper, yet the knowledge of it set me very much at ease, by satisfying me that my former coldness proceeded not from any defect of temper or genius, but from a disease to which any one may be subject. . . . . I believe it is a certain fact, that most of the philosophers who have gone before us have been overthrown by the greatness of their genius, and that little more is required to make a man succeed in this study, than to throw off all prejudices either for his own opinions or for those of others. At least this is all I have to depend on for the truth of my reasonings, which I have multiplied to such a degree, that within these three years I find I have scribbled many a quire of paper in which there is nothing contained but my own inventions. This, with the reading most of the celebrated books in Latin, French, and English, and acquiring the Italian, you may think a sufficient business for one in perfect health, and so it would, had it been done to any purpose; but my disease was a cruel encumbrance on me. I found that I was not able to follow out any train of thought by one continued stretch of view, but by repeated interruptions, and by refreshing my eye from time to time upon other objects. . . . I have noticed in the writings of the French mystics, and in those of our fanatics here, that when they give a history of the situation of their souls, they mention a coldness and desertion of the spirit which frequently returns; and some of them at the beginning have been tormented with it many years. As this kind of devotion depends entirely on the force of passion, and consequently of the animal spirits, I have often thought that their case and mine were pretty parallel, and that their rapturous admirations might discompose the fabric of the nerves and brain as much as profound reflections, and that warmth or enthusiasm which is inseparable from them.

"However this may be, I have not come out of the cloud so well as they commonly tell us they have done, or rather begin to despair of ever recovering. . . . . The questions I would humbly propose to you are: Whether among all those scholars you have been acquainted with, you have ever known any affected in this manner? Whether I can ever hope for a recovery? Whether I must long wait for it? Whether my recovery will ever be perfect, and my spirits regain their former spring and vigor, so as to endure the fatigue of deep and abstruse thinking?" — (*Burton*, vol. i. p. 31–38.)

when he had hardly advanced beyond boyhood. His skeptical tendencies, — thus deeply radicated, and indulged at an age so portentously early, — every thing in his nature tended to confirm, and nothing in his experience and subsequent history tended to correct. He was of a naturally frigid temperament, — entirely without enthusiasm, — with little sympathy for the lofty or heroic in sentiment or character. Nor, in his after-life was there any thing to develop any latent germs of such qualities; he never passed through those agitating scenes of absorbing love, or joy, or sorrow, or hope, or fear, which form the discipline of life, and so often profoundly modify, and even revolutionize, the human character; which often develop qualities not suspected to exist, or shiver into atoms the sentiments and opinions formed in youthful inexperience. With only one dominant passion, as he himself admits, — that ambition of literary distinction, which tended rather to inflame than correct his early love of dazzling paradox, — he passed life in respectable epicurean tranquillity. A most commendable frugality made him content in youth with very little; he saw, as years rolled on, increasing prosperity in every desirable form, — an income which his moderation counted wealth, a steadily increasing reputation, "troops of friends," flatteries, uninterrupted health, and, in a word, every thing that could lay to sleep (as prosperity very generally does) the susceptibilities and emotions of man's spiritual nature. His bark sailed on a smooth sea, and encountered none of those shocks or tempests which, more than most things, make the voyager of life consider whether his ship is constructed and equipped as well for the storm as for the calm. It may be added, that so habitually deficient is Hume in the sentiment of veneration, — so unnatural the apathy with which he regards religious phenomena, — so easy, apparently, the entire extrusion of the subject from his thoughts, — so frightfully contented does he seem with his skepticism, — that,

though this state of mind was encouraged, no doubt, by the too congenial atmosphere of his age, and the French society he loved, it is difficult not to infer some *abnormality* in the very original structure of his moral nature; and it is the kindest apology that can be made for him.

On any other hypothesis, he cannot be too severely censured for the indolent facility with which he seems to have acquiesced, in after-life, in his first early conclusions — the very immaturity of which might well have awakened suspicion. There is no proof that, when he became a man in intellect, he ever seriously revolved them again. He must also be blamed for the resolute way in which he evaded or silenced every attempt to turn his mind to the reconsideration of his opinions. A remarkable instance of this disposition to get rid of expostulation occurs in one of his letters to Blair, cited by Mr. Burton: "Whenever," says Hume, "I have had the pleasure to be in your company, if the discourse turned on any common subject of literature or reasoning, I always parted from you both entertained and instructed. But, when the conversation was diverted by you from this channel towards the subject of your profession — though I doubt not but your intentions were friendly towards me — I own I never received the same satisfaction; I was apt to be tired, and you to be angry. I would therefore wish, for the future, whenever my good fortune throws me in your way, that these topics should be forborne between us. *I have long since done with all inquiries on such subjects and have become incapable of receiving instruction.*"

Blair's letter, by the way, shows that Hume's Scottish clerical admirers did not hesitate to embrace opportunities of faithful expostulation as far as Hume's repellent humor permitted, and proves how unjust and uncharitable the suspicions which were sometimes founded on the intimacy between him and them. A man's Christianity would be equivocally evinced by renouncing all intercourse with such

as renounce it; such conduct would suggest to those thus repelled a strange idea of the charity which professed to seek their spiritual welfare! It were rather to be desired that every Hume or Gibbon might have for his bosom friend a Bishop Butler or a Robert Hall.

Of the personal and social elements of Hume's character it is unnecessary to say any thing, as the subject has been so admirably touched by Sir James Mackintosh, in his preliminary Dissertation. That he was very amiable, and well merited the admiration of his friends, cannot be doubted; though the eulogy of Adam Smith, uttered in the first freshness of grief at his loss is, as Sir James observes, "an affectionate exaggeration." "Such a praise," he justly says, "can never be earned without passing through either of the extremes of fortune, without standing the test of temptations, dangers, and sacrifices. It may be said, with truth, the private character of Mr. Hume exhibited all the virtues which a man of reputable station, under a mild government, in the quiet times of a civilized country, has often the opportunity to practise."

In certain respects, Hume presented rather a curious contrast. He was by no means the impassive person his general coldness of temperament would lead us to conclude, and by no means the unprejudiced person which a skeptical philosophy may be presumed to have a tendency to form, and which he would fain be thought. Where his solitary passion — literary ambition — was in question, his vanity is as impatient, exacting, and querulous as that of any mortal; in spite of constantly brightening prospects and widening fame, he is perpetually harping about imaginary neglect and imaginary persecution. Similarly as to prejudice; his bitterness against the English[1] will just match,

[1] Thus he speaks of the English in 1764: "That nation are relapsing fast into the deepest stupidity and ignorance. The taste for literature is neither decayed nor depraved here as with the barbarians on

and no more than match, with Johnson's bitterness against the Scotch. In these two men, the two nations may justly consider themselves quits; and fortunately are never likely to have any more such absurd accounts to settle between them. It is the happiness of our age that Englishmen would as little tolerate the prejudices of Johnson as Scotchmen would those of Hume. But it is in his *historical* writings that Hume's intense capacity of prejudice appears most signally. He who was the most skeptical of philosophers became, in fact, the most bigoted of historians; with this aggravation of his bigotry, however, — that all the acts and opinions of which, in his history, he was so keen an apologist, were in direct defiance of the general strain of his political sentiments and speculations, as disclosed in his *Political Essays*.

As to his character as a philosopher, his genius will probably be more appreciated, and its achievements less valued, by successive generations of readers. His capacity cannot be well exaggerated. That such a work as the *Treatise of Human Nature*, or the *Essays*, should have proceeded from so young a man, gives an impression of subtlety, acuteness, and ingenuity seldom, if ever, surpassed. But these productions are chiefly remarkable as proofs of his genius, and for the searching investigations to which they led on the part of others; not for their intrinsic value. System, as both Stewart and Mackintosh observe, he had none; he is constantly shifting his ground, and contradictions

the banks of the Thames. . . Can you seriously talk of my continuing an Englishman? Am I or are you an Englishman? Do they not treat with derision our pretensions to that name, and with hatred our just pretensions to surpass and govern them? . . . (1775) I have a reluctance to think of settling among the factious barbarians of London, who will hate me because I am a Scotsman, and am not a Whig, and despise me because I am a man of letters. . . (1776) It is lamentable to think how much that nation has declined in literature in our time."

without number may be detected in his writings. The fact is, that provided he could find any arguments to support the paradox of skepticism which happened to be the theme of one essay, he did not care how it might be opposed to some other paradox of skepticism which was defended in another essay. Thus, while speculatively arguing that neither "intuition," "demonstration," "experience," nor any other conceivable reason, really authorizes us to conclude that any one sequence will follow any one antecedent rather than another, or that the future will resemble the past, he, in his *Essay on Miracles*, declares all "miracles" utterly incredible,[1] because they would contradict the uniformity of nature as ascertained by experience:[2] ambitious to outdo Berkeley by annihilating not only matter but mind, and reducing every thing in the universe to "impressions and ideas," he abundantly contradicts himself (but here, to be sure, he could not help it) by saying in the same breath,

[1] This inconsistency with his speculative principles is the least defect in that acute but sophistical performance. But its fallacies have been too often pointed out to need being mentioned here.

[2] "For all inferences from experience suppose, as their foundation, that the future will resemble the past, and that similar powers will be conjoined with similar sensible qualities. If there be any suspicion that the course of nature may change, and that the past may be no rule for the future, all experience becomes useless, and can give rise to no inference or conclusion. It is impossible, therefore, that any arguments from experience can prove this resemblance of the past to the future; since all these arguments are founded on the supposition of that resemblance. Let the course of things be allowed hitherto ever so regular, that alone, without some new argument or inference, proves not that for the future it will continue so. In vain do you pretend to have learned the nature of bodies from your past experience." — (*Essays*, vol. ii., *Sceptical Doubts*). "A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as full *proof* of the future existence of that event." — (*Essays*, vol. ii., *Miracles.*)

that of the existence of these "impressions and ideas" even skepticism cannot doubt, since *we* — that is, the doubted conscious unity, Mind — cannot but be conscious of them: similarly, while affirming, consistently enough in words all his life long, his belief in an intelligent First Cause, (and it is the only determinate religious tenet which he seems to have maintained,) nearly all his speculative reasonings — especially his theory of causation — *tend* to show that of that primal truth there cannot be satisfactory proof, and he has even furnished atheism with a novel paradox in its support, founded on the world's being a "singular effect:" indignantly repelling, as a perversion of his meaning, the notion that he "had ever asserted so absurd a proposition as that any thing might arise without a cause," he has yet so expressed himself, that (as has been well said by one of his most acute critics) the entire metaphysical world has shared in the mistake! Magnanimously declaring at one time that the philosopher must abide by *truth*, even though it were proved pernicious to mankind, — quite in the lofty *fiat justitia ruat cœlum* style, — he, at another, advises (and it is a deep blot on his character) a skeptical friend to accept church preferment, and preach what he did not believe; affirming that "to pique oneself on sincerity in such matters is to put too great a respect on the vulgar and their superstitions!" Well may one of his most charitable critics proclaim himself "ashamed to print" the philosopher's words! Again, while in his *Essay on Polygamy and Divorce* he sees so clearly and illustrates so well the infinite importance of preserving the domestic relations pure, he speaks, in his *Inquiry into the Principles of Morals*, in an apologetic tone of vices which, if freely indulged, would soon dissolve society — an inconsistency which has called forth the just animadversion of Sir James Mackintosh.

In a word, there is no end to the incoherencies of Hume's statements, and which are only concealed so long as one

essay is not collated with another. He wrote, as it were, with the old Roman *stylus* — a sharp pen at one end, and an instrument of erasure at the other.

His fame as a philosopher, therefore, will rest rather on what he was capable of than of what he achieved; and it may be said, by a somewhat similar paradox, that his fame as an historian will rest much more on his manner than on his matter. His work is everywhere disfigured with gross defects, inaccuracies, and prejudices, as Hallam, Brodie, and many others, have abundantly shown; but the charm of his style embalms and perfumes his errors, and men will still be willing to read him — though they disbelieve.

Not, indeed, that even his style as an historian is wholly free from defects. It is cold — that might be expected from the frigid temperament of the man. It is wanting in imaginativeness and consequently in animation, and the perfection of graphic skill. This fault again is often aggravated by superficial knowledge of his materials; for a full mastery of details is the only thing which can render precise statement safe. Thus Hume often omits names and dates where they ought to be inserted, and conceals the necessity of definite statement in convenient vagueness. His assertions are often so general and so adroitly balanced and qualified, that they seem to betray a consciousness that he is standing on delicate ground, and that he had better not commit himself to too much exactness, lest some critic of greater knowledge of details should convict him of inaccuracy. These artifices he employs no doubt with great dexterity, but one would greatly have preferred that there should have been no occasion for them. Still, in spite of all these deductions, the narrative is so lucid, the grouping so admirable, the reflections so unforced and natural, and the style flows on in such a stream of tranquil beauty — combining so much of flexile grace and natural dignity, that his work will ever stand high in the estimate of every culti-

vated taste. It is an instance of the importance of *style*, as Sir J. Mackintosh remarked of Butler. That profound thinker has been often undervalued for want of a style worthy of his thoughts; the work of Hume, in spite of his defects, has been raised into one of the most familiar manuals of history because it has one. So senseless is that cry which one sometimes hears — that style is of little consequence, if facts be but stated. So little is this to be expected that though Hume's inaccuracies have been exposed a thousand times he still maintains, in virtue of his style alone, the place of a classic of English history.

The same qualities of style, are, if possible, more manifest in Hume's *Philosophical Essays*. Amidst that absence of all generous enthusiasm which we should expect in so complete a Pyrrhonist, and a prodigal use of subtle and ingenious sophistry that would seem to have had no other object than to confound and perplex the intellect of the reader, they abound in passages which, considered simply as composition, are exquisite specimens of refined simplicity — of that severe attic grace which it is evident he had carefully studied and cultivated, as well as of a very quiet but most elegant pleasantry. And amongst such passages few are more striking than those in which the sceptic acknowledges the vanity of skepticism.[1]

[1] Nothing can be happier than the pleasantry in some of Hume's familiar letters, and it makes us regret that we have not more of them. We would willingly exchange for them portions either of his *Essays* or his *History*, bulk for bulk. Light and trivial in comparison no doubt they would be, but one might find consolation in thinking that elegant triviality was at least as good as grave error or pernicious paradox. How graceful is the following *badinage:* — "I live still, and must for a twelvemonth, in my old house in St. James's Court, which is very cheerful, and even elegant, but too small to display my great talent for cookery — the science to which I intend to addict the remaining years of my life! I have just now lying on the table before me a receipt for making *soupe à la reine*, copied with my own hand.

The fullest and most authentic account of Hume's *Li and Writings* will be found in Burton's recent *Life*, t which we willingly confess our obligations.

For beef and cabbage (a charming dish,) and old mutton, and old claret, nobody excels me. I make also sheep's head broth, in a manner that Mr. Keith speaks of it for eight days after; and the Du de Nivernois would bind himself apprentice to my lass to learn it! I have already sent a challenge to David Moncrief; you will see that in a twelvemonth he will take to the writing of history (the field I have deserted), for, as to giving of dinners, he can now have no further pretensions. I should have made a very bad use of my abode in Paris, if I could not get the better of a mere provincial like him."

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